Consumption Motives for Luxury Fashion Products:

Effect of Social Comparison and Vanity on Purchase Behaviour

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ABSTRACT

This thesis aims to investigate the relationships between vanity, social comparison and purchase behaviour. Specifically, this thesis defines and develops a conceptual model that expands on these relationships where vanity and social comparison act as antecedents to consumers' self-esteem and product evaluation which in turn gives rise to purchase behaviour for luxury fashion products. Using this model, the research examines how manipulations of social comparison and vanity are reflected in these relationships and the resulting impact on purchase behaviour. To empirically test this model, an online experiment using a 3x2 between-subjects factorial design was conducted, where respondents were exposed to modified print advertisements for luxury branded sunglasses. A total of 297 responses were collected from a pool of Amazon's Mechanical Turk workers, which were analysed using multiple regression, factorial ANCOVA and path analysis to assess the hypothesised relationships. The results indicate that vanity appeals were indeed responsible for the way in which the product was evaluated which positively translated into purchase consideration. However, though social comparison was proven to negatively impact on self-esteem, this change in self-esteem was not significant in determining purchase behaviour. Additionally, social anxiety and public self-consciousness were found to be antecedents to the modelled relationships. The theoretical and managerial implications of these findings, along with suggested directions for future research, are discussed.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The fashion industry, considered a multibillion-dollar global enterprise, is dedicated to the production and sale of clothes (Netemeyer, Burton, & Lichtenstein, 1995; Steele, 2015). In 2014, annual global revenue was estimated to be $1,200 billion (Statistic Brain, 2014). Women's wear was expected to have accounted for $621 billion of this alone, with bridal, men's, and children's clothing accounting for the remaining $579 billion (Breyer, 2012). High-end, luxury fashion brands are one of the most profitable sectors with Louis Vuitton topping the list with annual revenue of just over $37 billion (Statistic Brain, 2014). This is no surprise when one of the most regarded high-end fashion events, New York Fashion Week, is attended by 232,000 people each year and brings in approximately $20 million to the New York economy (Breyer, 2012). Due to the size and significance of the fashion industry, fashion clothing has been an area of interest for consumer research for many years (O'Cass, 2000, 2004; Phillips & McQuarrie, 2010). O'Cass and McEwen (2006, p. 26) assert that "there is perhaps no single issue that dominates the modern psyche as much as fashion and consumption". Despite this, there is limited research on motivating factors that drive purchase for luxury fashion consumption. In particular, consumer vanity, self-consciousness, and social comparison have all been identified in the marketing literature as having considerable impact on the consumption of fashion products (e.g. Durvasula, Lysonski, & Watson, 2001; Netemeyer et al., 1995; Workman & Lee, 2011). Yet, little research looks to examine the relationship of these constructs in the context of fashion consumption (Workman & Lee, 2011). Consequently, this thesis addresses the role of social comparison, vanity and public self-consciousness in the consumer decision-making process for luxury fashion products, and the resulting impact on purchase behaviour.

1.2 RESEARCH BACKGROUND

The aim of this research is to test the relationships between social comparison, vanity and self-consciousness, and the impact this relationship has on the purchase behaviour of luxury fashion products. Primarily, the research aims to explore purchase behaviour in response to advertising messages where social comparison is induced and appeals are made to vanity.

Additionally, the impact of public self-consciousness on these relationships is evaluated, as well as how these constructs affect product evaluation in terms of satisfying motives arising from appearance and achievement vanity appeals made in advertising messages.

Though the meaning of luxury is context-specific (Braudel, 1981; Rassuli & Hollander, 1986), luxury is generally used interchangeably with 'premium' or 'prestige' as indicated by the price of a product (Vigneron & Johnson, 1999). Where a high price constitutes a barrier for many to obtain a product and signals greater luxury, high prices increase the relative attractiveness of a product and market demand (Braun & Wicklund, 1989). This attractiveness arises from the social connotations associated with an individual's willingness and ability to pay premium prices for luxury goods. Namely, the high price of a luxury good enables the purchaser to communicate information about the self, regarding their financial standing, social image, and identity. Luxury branded clothing is especially considered to be associated with a high degree of status and image (Fitzmaurice & Comegys, 2006). Specifically, luxury fashion consumption is largely driven by the symbolic nature and the use of these products to communicate information about the self to others.

Levy (1982) explains that the field of consumer behaviour is centred on the self-concept, as a set of perceptions consumers hold about themselves, who they are, and how they go about symbolising their identity. The linkage of an individual's self-concept with the symbolic value of goods is considered by Grubb and Grathwohl (1967) to be a more specific means of theoretical approach to consumer behaviour. Furthermore, the field of consumer behaviour tends to operate under the assumption that product consumption is a response, rather than the cause of, behaviour (Solomon, 1983). While consumption is a response to a need or goal of the consumer, products also act as stimuli in providing cues and information about an individual (Solomon, 1983). The social, symbolic connotations of products are therefore considered to be a primary reason for purchase consideration (Solomon, 1983). Moreover, the demand for a material object is believed to arise from the desire to enlarge the sense of self, which can only be achieved by examining what we already have and possess (Belk, 1988). Thus, possessions allow individuals to "seek, express, confirm and ascertain a sense of being through what they have" (Belk, 1988, p. 146).

The notion of possessions as an extension of the self is widely discussed in the marketing literature (Banister & Hogg, 2004; Belk, 1988; Csikszentmihalyi & Rochberg-Halton, 1981; Dittmar & Pepper, 1994; Furby, 1978a; Grubb & Grathwohl, 1967; Levy, 1959, 1982; O'Cass

& McEwen, 2006; Prelinger, 1959; Reed, Forehand, Puntoni, & Warlop, 2012; Wood, Giordano-Beech, Taylor, Michela, & Gaus, 1994). Fashion in particular, is considered to be an extension of the self (Eze, Chin, & Lee, 2012; McQuarrie, Miller, & Phillips, 2013; O'Cass & Frost, 2002; Phillips & McQuarrie, 2010). Because fashion and other material goods are regarded as a part of the self, society places considerable importance on consumption behaviour, and the possessions owned by an individual (Belk, 1988; Dittmar, 1994). Possessions play a role in everyday life as "expressive symbols of individuals' social standing as well as of their personal qualities, attitudes and beliefs" (Dittmar, 1994, p. 562). Specifically, individuals associate others with their possessions and then draw inference regarding the traits of the individual based on what they already know about the social connotations of the products they possess (Belk, 1988; Dittmar & Pepper, 1994; O'Cass, 2004). The idea that we are what we have and possess is perhaps the "most basic and powerful fact of consumer behaviour" (Belk, 1988, p. 139). Therefore, possessions are widely considered to enhance one's self-image and social standing. Furthermore, not only are possessions an extension of the self, but also an extension of the self over that of another individual (Furby, 1978a). Thus, the motivation to purchase a good is, at least in part, driven by the ability of a good to convey identity and achievement (vanity) and control the perception of the self by others (self-consciousness), which is determined by social comparison.

Motives, whether cognitive, physical, emotional, or social in origin, stimulate and drive consumer behaviour (Workman & Lee, 2011). Motives can be internal or external in nature and play an important role in the consumption process (Workman & Lee, 2011). Internal motives such as vanity, self-consciousness and social comparison have been identified as playing a considerable role in consumer behaviour. This is particularly evident in the context of fashion products. Vanity has been found to influence both the manufacturing and marketing aspects of the fashion industry, particularly with the rise of vanity sizing and advertising appearance appeals (Netemeyer et al., 1995; Workman & Lee, 2011). As noted by Durvasula et al. (2001) and Workman and Lee (2011), entire industries, including fashion, rely heavily on consumer vanity. A multitude of fashion products are advertised based on claims that they are able to enhance one's appearance (Durvasula et al., 2001). Moreover, these same advertising messages preach the benefits of physical attractiveness including increased social popularity, power and increased self-esteem (Durvasula et al., 2001). Clothing not only alters the appearance of an individual's body, but assists in distinguishing an individual from others, and enables them to

express group membership and identity (Belk, 1988; Tharp & Scott, 1990). Group membership and identity includes connotations of role fulfilment and social class. Vanity motives pertaining to achievement, role fulfilment and class are considered important in this process, giving rise to status and prestige seeking behaviour. Clothing products are seen as a significant source of prestige (Belk, 1988; Eastman, Goldsmith, & Flynn, 1999; Snyder, 1972), and are considered to be a primary source of social display (Lurie, 1981; O'Cass & McEwen, 2006).

Individuals who are high in public self-consciousness are particularly concerned with their appearance and the way in which they are perceived by others in terms of identity and prestige (Workman & Lee, 2011). Individuals who are high in public self-consciousness have also been found to express positive attitudes towards fashion clothing as a result (Lertwannawit & Mandhachitara, 2012). In order to affect and moderate the way that an individual is perceived by others, consumers seek products that convey information to significant others. Emulation and show are prominent consumption forces in fashion, where 'show' refers to consumers using consumption to communicate (Rassuli & Hollander, 1986). Fashion products are rich in such symbolic and communicative content (Grubb & Grathwohl, 1967; O'Cass, 2000, 2004; Solomon, 1983). In this way, clothing is purchased by consumers as a 'second skin' to convey information about the self to others (Belk, 1988). Dimensions of the self are present in clothing, where the wearer is a social stimulus eliciting others to anticipate and evaluate the individuals behaviour based on the information communicated by the clothing he or she wears (Solomon, 1983). Moreover, clothing is considered to be more potent in illustrating links between the individual and the roles, attitudes and behaviours they wish to communicate, in comparison to verbal communication (Solomon, 1983; Wiley, Krisjanous, & Cavana, 2007). Such evaluations and deductions are only possible through the process of social comparison. As such, social comparison is also considered to be highly influential in driving purchase of socially visible and highly symbolic products such as clothing (Workman & Lee, 2011). Social comparison enables consumers to evaluate their relative standing to significant others, including their use of symbolic products. Consequently, this research explores the impact of induced social comparison combined with vanity appeals, on consumer's evaluation of a luxury fashion product in an advertising message. This evaluation involves determining the ability of the product to satisfy the consumption motives addressed above. As it is the satisfaction of these motives which ultimately drive purchase behaviour.

1.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Given the preceding discussion, this research aims to meet the following research objectives.

- To develop and define the nature of the relationship between vanity, social comparison, self-consciousness and purchase behaviour.
- To develop a model that portrays this relationship and the intermediary evaluative process.
- To determine how the relationship between vanity, social comparison, and self-consciousness impact on the evaluative process, and how this evaluative process impacts purchase behaviour.

1.4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research is concerned with consumer responses to variables within an advertising context, which can best be measured when manipulating these variables in an experimental design. Therefore, this research adopts a 3x2 between-subjects factorial design to test the effects of social comparison and vanity appeals on consumer's evaluative process and resulting purchase behaviour while measuring for the effect of self-consciousness.

1.5 RESEARCH CONTRIBUTIONS

This research has both theoretical and practical implications. Theoretical contributions in the brand management, consumer behaviour, and advertising fields of the marketing discipline are anticipated. Moreover, it is expected that this research will provide marketers of luxury products with further understanding of vanity appeals and social comparison in advertising. In addition, expanded knowledge of the evaluative processes and considerations undergone by consumers in consumption contexts for luxury goods is expected.

1.5.1 Theoretical Implications

This research contributes to the marketing literature by expanding on the acknowledged, but untested relationship between vanity, self-consciousness, and social comparison. This research will provide clarity regarding the impact that social comparison and vanity have on purchase consideration when they interact, and the effect that self-consciousness has on this interaction.

Furthermore, the research will determine the evaluative process undergone by consumers as a result of exposure to social comparison and vanity appeals and how this translates into purchase behaviour for luxury fashion products.

1.5.2 Practical Implications

This research will provide marketers of luxury goods with a better understanding of the way social comparison and vanity appeals can be utilised in advertising messages to generate high purchase behaviour. Increased understanding of the impact of these variables on consumers evaluative process and resulting purchase behaviour, will better position marketers to produce advertising for luxury goods. Specifically, marketers will be better able to produce advertising messages that satisfy consumer needs and motives arising from social comparison, vanity, and self-consciousness.

1.6 THESIS OUTLINE

This thesis consists of six chapters. The current chapter has introduced the research by providing a justification for the chosen subject area, research gap and significance of chosen field. The content of the subsequent chapters is as follows.

In Chapter Two, Literature Review, motives for luxury product consumption are explored further, including a discussion of consumption for the portrayal of appearance and achievement. Then, an overview and discussion of the social comparison, vanity, and self-consciousness literature is provided.

Chapter Three, Conceptual Framework and Hypotheses, presents existing theory to build a conceptual model and develop research hypotheses. Covariate variables are also presented and their predicted impact on the model is discussed.

Chapter Four, Methodology, outlines the methods adopted for the research. Development of the online experiment and stimuli, sampling procedures and questionnaire are discussed as well as results from pre-study questionnaires and pre-testing.

Chapter Five, Results, offers the findings of the research including a sample overview, hypothesis testing and path analysis.

Finally Chapter Six, Discussion and Conclusions, presents a discussion of key research findings, and research limitations, implications and contributions. Suggestions for future research are also provided.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter is to provide a theoretical background on the key areas of research that form the basis for this research. This chapter first addresses the self-concept. This includes ways in which individuals go about maintaining and enhancing aspects of the self-concept, as well as self-congruity and purchase behaviour arising from individuals' desire to portray the self-concept to others. Motives for luxury fashion products are examined and a discussion on consumer vanity and the resulting achievement and appearance is provided. The next section explores the process of social comparison including the different types of social comparison and the effect on self-esteem. Lastly, the self-consciousness literature is reviewed with an emphasis on public self-consciousness and the resulting social anxiety. This chapter provides the foundation for the conceptual model and subsequent hypotheses, which are presented in Chapter Three.

2.2 OVERVIEW OF LUXURY GOOD CONSUMPTION

2.2.1 Introduction to Non-Utilitarian Motives for Consumption

Classic economic theory assumes that goods are purchased by consumers on the basis of maximising utility. However, this logic fails to explain consumption motives for luxury goods where luxury goods hold no additional utilitarian benefit above non-luxury goods (Braun & Wicklund, 1989; Dittmar, 1994; Hudders, 2012; Mandel, Petrova, & Cialdini, 2006). Thus, luxury goods must provide consumers with benefits that extend beyond traditional utility maximisation if consumers are willing to pay premium prices for functionally equivalent goods (Bagwell & Bernheim, 1996; Dhar & Wertenbroch, 2000; McCracken, 1986). The acquisition of luxury items for non-utilitarian motives is widely discussed in the materialism literature (e.g. Belk, 1984, 1985; Chang & Arkin, 2002; Christopher & Schlenker, 2004; Dittmar & Pepper, 1994; Fitzmaurice & Comegys, 2006; Richins & Dawson, 1992; Wiedmann, Hennigs, & Platz, 2011). In fact, luxury goods are considered to mitigate some of the negative impacts of materialism on consumer well-being and in doing so, luxury product consumption has been dubbed the "silver lining of materialism" (Hudders & Pandelaere, 2012, p. 411). Though non-

utilitarian motives vary by name from author to author, they can be categorised as being either expressive or impressive (Han, Nunes, & Drèze, 2010; Hudders, 2012; Vigneron & Johnson, 1999; Wiedmann, Hennigs, & Siebels, 2009). Where expressive motives arise from the communicative power of goods (McCracken, 1986), the emotional and hedonic benefits of a product are central for impressive motives. Expressive and impressive motives explain why consumers are willing to pay premium prices for luxury goods on the basis that they provide psychological benefits not afforded by non-luxury items (Hudders, 2012).

2.2.2 Expressive Motives

Expressive motives are derived from consumers need to communicate information about the self to significant individuals or reference groups (Hudders, 2012). The communicative power and socially attributed meanings of material goods is widely discussed in the marketing and psychology literature (e.g. Belk, 1988; Dittmar, 1994; Dittmar & Pepper, 1994; Fitzmaurice & Comegys, 2006; Furby, 1978a; Grubb & Grathwohl, 1967; Hyatt, 1992; Levy, 1959; McCracken, 1986; Richins, 1994b; Solomon, 1983; Wicklund & Gollwitzer, 1981). As explained by Levy (1959, p. 117), "people buy things not only for what they can do, but also for what they mean". Braun and Wicklund (1989), as supported by Wiedmann et al., (2009), note that consumers do not derive value from the product directly, but the characteristics and psychological benefits of possessing the product give rise to utility. Therefore, the value attributed to luxury goods is derived from the inherent communicative standing of these goods (McCracken, 1986; Richins, 1994b; Vigneron & Johnson, 1999). Information communicated by individuals can include wealth, social status, and personality (Hudders, 2012). The communication of wealth, status and success dates back to the time of Rae (1834) and Veblen (1899), and arises from the premium pricing and perceived exclusivity of luxury goods indicating the relative wealth of individuals (Lichtenstein, Ridgway, & Netemeyer, 1993). Since Rae and Veblen, communication through product use has been extended to communicating belongingness to a group (Bearden & Etzel, 1982; Rassuli & Hollander, 1986) and the communication of identity and personal characteristics (Belk, 1988; Chang & Arkin, 2002; Christopher & Schlenker, 2004; Hudders, 2012; Richins, 1994a). Furby (1978a) identified that the enhancement of social status, and defining individuality, are particularly salient motivators for the acquisition and possession of luxury goods. Thus, expressive motives are particularly significant in the luxury good market.

2.2.3 Rise of Impressive Motives and Significance of Expressive Motives

For many years, expressive motives have occupied a focal position in the marketing literature (e.g. Bagwell & Bernheim, 1996; Belk, 1988; Dittmar & Pepper, 1994; Han et al., 2010; Hudders, 2012; Wiedmann et al., 2011). In spite of this, Hudders (2012) suggests a shift away from expressive motives towards impressive motives in the context of luxury products. This changing dynamic is believed to be driven by consumers purchasing goods not just to signal information to others, but because consumers are placing more value on the quality and sensory experience provided by luxuries (Hudders, 2012). However, other studies suggest that these motives are neither exhaustive nor mutually exclusive (Dhar & Wertenbroch, 2000; Hartman, Shim, Barber, & O'Brien, 2006). Instead, it is suggested that the symbolic and communicative power of goods that drive expressive motives may be stronger for goods with high hedonic qualities, such as luxuries (Dhar & Wertenbroch, 2000). Though expressive consumption motives for luxury products that are linked to status acquisition are seen as traditional or outdated by some, these motives still serve a "strategic principle for the marketing management of luxury brands" (Tsai, 2005, p. 430). As noted by Tsai (2005), expressive motives still play an important role in consumption behaviours of luxury products. Therefore, these motives are crucial in profit generation for many firms. Thus, when exploring the context of luxury good consumption, understanding the underlying dimension of expressive motives in signalling information about the self-concept and impressing others is of particular significance (Hudders, 2012).

2.3 THE SELF-CONCEPT

2.3.1 Introduction to the Self-Concept

The self-concept is a multidimensional construct that captures personal traits, characteristics, personality and self-perceptions, and is what is salient when we consider ourselves (Gil, Kwon, Good, & Johnson, 2012; O'Cass & Frost, 2002). Individuals intentionally or unintentionally lay claim to particular self-concepts through aspects of their appearance and behaviour (Schlenker & Leary, 1982). As outlined by the theory of impression management, the image that individuals portray through their self-concept has implications for the way in which those individuals are characterised and regarded by others (Schlenker & Leary, 1982). The

development and maintenance of the self-concept is considered to be significant in regulating consumer behaviour (O'Cass & Frost, 2002), as the involvement of consumption in self-identification and self-concept construction is widely recognised (Charmley, Garry, & Ballantine, 2013). In particular, an individual's self-concept has been confirmed to affect purchasing behaviour for luxury goods in order to "integrate symbolic meaning into their own identity" (Wiedmann et al., 2009, p. 631). Material goods are often used to define and construct personal and social identity or one's self-concept (Banister & Hogg, 2004; Fitzmaurice & Comegys, 2006; Luhtanen & Crocker, 1992) as feelings of identity invested in material possessions is incredibly high (Belk, 1988). This arises from possessions being considered to be "important material symbols of identity" (Dittmar, 1994, p. 563). Moreover, consistency in the self-concept affects consumer behaviour by driving motives such as those arising from the need for self-congruity and self-esteem. This is indicative of why consumers take preference for products deemed as enhancing self-esteem and that hold high social symbolic value, and why individuals place importance on reference group approval in their product use (O'Cass & Frost, 2002). A highly consistent self-concept is one in which perceptions of the self are constant. A self-concept that is well developed and consistent is less susceptible to interpersonal influence (Gil et al., 2012), and is believed to yield high self-esteem for the individual. Individuals with ambiguity in their self-concept, or who have a self-concept in need of enhancement, depend on external sources, such as consumption, to mitigate uncertainty (Gil et al., 2012).

2.3.2 Impression Management, Self-Enhancement and Self-Completion

While in the presence of others, it is generally in an individual's best interest to convey a particular impression (Schlenker & Leary, 1982). Some impressions will be desirable and produce a favourable reaction from others (Schlenker & Leary, 1982), such as the process of self-enhancement. The enhancement of the self-concept arises from social interaction (Banister & Hogg, 2004; Grubb & Grathwohl, 1967). The self-concept of the consumer is based on the individuals' perceptions of the reactions of others (Solomon, 1983). When individuals act to control the way in which they are perceive by others, it is deemed to be self-presentational behaviour (Schlenker & Leary, 1982). In self-presentational behaviour, the intended reaction from significant others is a criteria for assessing the effectiveness of the individuals behaviour (Schlenker & Leary, 1982). In this case, this behaviour is the selection of a product as a symbol of the self. Through the recognition and reinforcing reactions of significant others, the self-

concept is strengthened and behaviour encouraged (Grubb & Grathwohl, 1967; Solomon, 1983). In this way, products become a means to cause desirable responses from significant individuals or groups (Belk, 1985; Bloch & Richins, 1992; Grubb & Grathwohl, 1967). Products and brands that are incongruent with the identity an individual wishes to pursue will be deliberately rejected (Charmley et al., 2013). Furthermore, positive responses and intended decoding of symbols by others and the self enables the transfer of the socially attributed meanings of the products onto the self (Grubb & Grathwohl, 1967), enhancing the self-concept and reinforcing behaviour (Banister & Hogg, 2004). Consumers will choose products for this process with meanings congruent with the self-concept driven for the desire for self-consistency (Banister & Hogg, 2004; Birdwell, 1968; Dolich, 1969; Gould, 1993; Richins, 1994b). Only products that are considered to be symbolised in a way that is similar with an individual's self-concept will enhance or maintain the self (Dolich, 1969). The process of gaining and enhancing ones identity and self-concept is considered to also act in the acquisition of self-esteem (Allport, 1937; Banister & Hogg, 2004; Belk, 1988; Luhtanen & Crocker, 1992). Consumers who are high in self-esteem are considered by Luhtanen and Crocker (1992) to be more likely to engage in self-enhancement behaviour, in contrast to those with low self-esteem who show tendencies to be self-protective. Furthermore, when a consumer uses fashion products believed to enhance their perceived appearance they experience greater self-esteem (Bloch & Richins, 1992).

2.3.3 Symbolic Compensation and Increasing Self-Congruity

When an individual has high personal interest and commitment within a certain context, that individual is more likely to be driven to compensate for short comings or strive for superior positioning (Braun & Wicklund, 1989). Consumption choices in this situation are made on the basis of whether or not that product is "symbolically harmonious" or congruent with the individuals aspirations and self-concept (Levy, 1959, p. 120). Compensation is accomplished though the accumulation of symbols signifying the individual's claim to that identity. Specifically, a symbol is deemed appropriate when it adds to, or reinforces the self-concept (Levy, 1959). Such purchase behaviours are considered to be a coping mechanism for dealing with feelings of uncertainty and their positon and role in society (Fitzmaurice & Comegys, 2006). Uncertainty is considered a driver for social comparison (see Section 2.5) as individuals who are uncertain about the self-concept will undergo social comparison to identify the source

of uncertainty, which can then be compensated for (Gibbons & Buunk, 1999; Lertwannawit & Mandhachitara, 2012).

Wicklund and Gollwitzer (1981) explain that self-symbolising behaviour is used to 'cover-up' flaws in the individuals training or performance in a particular role. Symbols are considered to be material indicators, such as products, that are reflective of a particular identity which can be used by individuals to signal information to significant others (Braun & Wicklund, 1989). The perceived success of an individual's performance within a social role is affected by the products used for that performance (Bloch & Richins, 1992). Consumption is also used to communicate commitment to particular lifestyles and peer groups (Charmley et al., 2013). The more central that role, lifestyle, or group is to the individual's identity, the more motivated they will be to create a favourable impression (Schlenker & Leary, 1982). Should the individual be inexperienced within the realm of the identity for which they are trying to claim, then that individual will be more motivated and likely to acquire symbols associated with that identity (Belk, 1988; Braun & Wicklund, 1989; Wicklund & Gollwitzer, 1981). For example, a student is more likely to have outward manifestations of a profession than an actual professional. Bloch and Richins (1992) deem this 'dressing for success', which they consider to be common in modern society. Braun and Wicklund (1989) indicate that there is a compensatory relationship between a person's sources of security in an identity and self-symbolising consumption. When an individual falls short on one symbolic dimension of their identity, they will move toward substituting an alternative to compensate for the lacking one (Wicklund & Gollwitzer, 1981). Desire to improve perceived role performance is therefore an obvious motivator for purchasing clothing and other publicly consumed goods (Bloch & Richins, 1992).

Public consumption is believed to be used by individuals as a compensatory action to restore power (Rucker & Galinsky, 2009). Where power is defined as "the capacity to control one's own and others' resources and outcomes", powerlessness leads individuals to seek status (Rucker & Galinsky, 2009, p. 549). Research has found that individuals are motivated to control their environment and that possession is one manifestation of this motivation where individuals have the ability to affect and control their possessions (Furby, 1978a). As powerlessness is considered to be an aversive state, individuals are motivated to reduce any sense of powerlessness and increase control by seeking possessions and status which are one basis of power (Furby, 1978a; Rucker & Galinsky, 2009; Vigneron & Johnson, 1999). As public luxury goods can signal status and therefore power to others, individuals who lack

power are more motivated by expressive motives to purchase these goods as a means of restoring power (Gil et al., 2012). Furthermore, Rucker and Galinsky (2009) reveal that high self-monitors also prefer products that signal image and status (Fitzmaurice & Comegys, 2006). This is said to arise from high self-monitors placing more importance on conformity in social contexts and that they are more concerned with how they are perceived by others compared to low self-monitors (see Section 2.6.4; Fitzmaurice & Comegys, 2006; Rucker & Galinsky, 2009). Such concern for portrayal of the self is considered by many to be a trait aspect of consumer vanity (Netemeyer et al., 1995; Wiedmann et al., 2011).

2.4 VANITY

2.4.1 Introduction to Vanity

Rae first linked the portrayal of status and the desire to show off luxuries to the construct of vanity in 1834. The realm of vanity has since been expanded to encompass a fixation with one's physical appearance in addition to the communication of status and achievements (Netemeyer et al., 1995). Vanity describes the characterization held by an individual in relation to their self-concept in terms of their professional achievement and physical appearance (Birdwell, 1968; Durvasula et al., 2001; Wiedmann et al., 2011). Vain individuals show an innate concern for the way in which they are perceived by others, and place significantly more importance on these components of the self-concept (Wang & Waller, 2006; Wiedmann et al., 2011). Thus, the construct of consumer vanity is defined as "an excessive concern for, and/or a positive (or perhaps inflated) view" of one's physical appearance and personal achievements (Netemeyer et al., 1995, p. 612). Trait aspects of vanity are of important interest to marketers due to their ability to influence purchase behaviour (Durvasula et al., 2001). As mentioned previously, communicating achievement and appearance through consumption pertains to behaviour directed at satisfying expressive motives. Consumption motivated by impressing others and portrayal of the self-concept is considered to serve as a strategic principle in the market for luxury goods (Corneo & Jeanne, 1997; Dittmar, 1994; O'Cass & Frost, 2002; Vigneron & Johnson, 1999; Wiedmann et al., 2011). Where 'impressing others' is an important driver for luxury goods, the theory of impression management states that consumers are strongly driven to establish favourable social images through their use of material possessions (Marcoux, Filiatrault, & Chéron, 1997; Wiedmann et al., 2009). Such social images are referred

to in the literature as the self-concept and, as per the theory of consumer vanity, are constructed of one's appearance and achievements. Thus, the extent to which an individual can be considered as 'vain' has implications for purchase behaviour directed at communicating appearance and achievements to others.

2.4.2 Consumption for the Portrayal of Appearance

There is a growing body of research on physical appearance and the impact on consumer behaviour (Netemeyer et al., 1995). Though the appearance component of consumer vanity can be considered to be exclusive to the way in which an individual 'looks', it has been suggested that outward physical appearance has important implications for establishing and maintaining ones self-concept (Netemeyer et al., 1995). In this light, consumption directed at favourable presentation of physical appearance is a proxy for physical representation of the aspects of one's self-concept not pertaining to achievements. For example, a young professional may purchase an expensive red suit not just because it documents her wealth and professional success, but because it amplifies her physical attractiveness in a way that conveys confidence and extraversion which are characteristics that she resonates with and wishes to showcase to others. Thus, consumers who purchase goods to satisfy motives arising from appearance vanity traits consume to portray identity beyond achievements (Dittmar, 1994; Wiedmann et al., 2011). Appearance consumption therefore pertains to signifying components of identity such as group membership, unique qualities, values, attitudes and interpersonal relationships (Belk, 1985; Dittmar, 1994; Dolich, 1969; Fitzmaurice & Comegys, 2006; Rassuli & Hollander, 1986; Reed et al., 2012; Richins, 1994b; Solomon, 1983; Tian, Bearden, & Hunter, 2001).

Expression of the wider construct of appearance is addressed in a large number of studies, many of which focus on consumption guided by stereotypes and societal role expectations (Banister & Hogg, 2004; Dittmar, 1994; Hyatt, 1992; Lertwannawit & Mandhachitara, 2012; Reed et al., 2012; Solomon, 1983). Consumption stereotypes are defined by Hyatt (1992, p. 299) as the "formation of generalisations about consumption objects possessed or used by members of a particular social category". These stereotypes are based on the association of ownership of a particular product or brand with membership in a certain social group (Hyatt, 1992). However, a single product cannot successfully inform others about an individual any more than a single word can convey the meaning of a poem (Belk, 1988; Douglas & Isherwood, 1972). Shared consumption symbols are used to indicate group membership and

define stereotypes (Belk, 1988). Multiple products exist within any given stereotype and such groups of products are referred to as symbol clusters (Levy, 1959). Levy (1959) explains that symbols are clustered together to reflect the modes of living, and tastes, of different groups. Consumption stereotypes and their associated symbol clusters enable a more holistic evaluation and portrayal of the self-concept and the identity of others. Consumers use consumption stereotypes to inform their consumption behaviour by purchasing goods from a symbol cluster associated with an identity they want to pursue. Consumers consciously select and reject products that they perceive to either be congruent or incongruent to their self-concept depending on the stereotype a given product or cluster is associated with. Stereotypes and symbol clusters play an important role in guiding the way individuals are perceived by, and perceive, others as well as enabling consumers to anticipate the kind of interactions that may take place with a particular individual (Dittmar, 1994; Grubb & Grathwohl, 1967). Therefore, stereotypes and symbol clusters form a significant part of the appearance consumption process in the selection of products that are congruent with the image that an individual wants to convey. In addition to appearance consumption, the portrayal of achievement is also considered to drive consumption for goods and to be a manifestation of vanity.

2.4.3 Consumption for the Portrayal of Achievement

When consumers purchase goods for the purpose of communicating status or success, they are expressing traits of achievement vanity (Durvasula et al., 2001). Consumers attempting to ‘show-off’ their achievements have been explored in the literature since Rae (1834) and Veblen (1899) identified conspicuous consumption in the 1800s. Though conspicuous and status consumption are often used interchangeably, O'Cass and McEwen (2006) and others (e.g. Eastman et al., 1999; O'Cass & Frost, 2002) ascertain that they are separate constructs. Where conspicuous consumption is centred on the visual display and overt use of products to enhance one’s image, status consumption is believed to be a matter of a consumer’s desire for prestige arising from the acquisition of high-status products and brands (Eastman et al., 1999; O'Cass & McEwen, 2006). Therefore, products used as visual evidence of status and success has been linked to, and is considered to be the manifestation of achievement vanity (Durvasula et al., 2001; Netemeyer et al., 1995; Workman & Lee, 2011). Where appearance vanity driven consumption focuses on portrayal of group membership, personality, values and attitudes,

consumption arising from achievement vanity encompasses the showcasing of wealth, status, professional and personal success.

The “acquisition of material goods is one of the strongest measures of social success and achievement” (O'Cass & McEwen, 2006, p. 27). Consumption behaviour arising from the desire to convey status and wealth through the acquisition and exhibition of material possessions was identified by Thorstein Veblen as conspicuous consumption. Though consumers desire to emulate and portray wealth was previously explored by John Rae in 1834 (Rae, 1834; Rassuli & Hollander, 1986), Veblen identified conspicuous consumption and status-seeking behaviour in 1899 where he described circumstances in which “visible success [became] an end sought for its own utility as a basis of esteem” (McCormick, 1983; Veblen, 1899, p. 12). Here, Veblen implied that consumers seek visible success and status as a means to increase esteem which in turn provides some level of utility. In the context of fashion, status yielding goods are those that are considered to be high quality, luxury and prestige goods (O'Cass & McEwen, 2006). Consumers pursue conspicuous consumption to enhance their prestige through public signalling of wealth and communication of affluence (O'Cass & McEwen, 2006). Moreover, where status is enhanced by the demonstration of material wealth (Bagwell & Bernheim, 1996), individuals were observed to engage in behaviour directed toward “creditable showing of accumulated wealth”, motivated by a desire for pecuniary emulation in the acquisition of status (Goffman, 1951; Veblen, 1899, p. 26). The example that Veblen used was a lower class individual attempting to raise himself to the level of his upper class counterparts by acquiring and displaying material possessions that they used (Veblen, 1899). In this instance, it is evident that conspicuous consumption can be motivated by the desire to imitate the monetary wealth of more fortunate others or an aspirational reference group (Bagwell & Bernheim, 1996). In addition to pecuniary emulation, invidious comparison was also identified by Veblen to be a motivator for conspicuous consumption (Bagwell & Bernheim, 1996; Veblen, 1899). Where pecuniary emulation involves consumption to approach an aspirational reference group, invidious comparison involves avoidance behaviour. In the case of social class, a member of the upper class consuming conspicuously in order to distinguish himself from the lower class is considered invidious comparison (Bagwell & Bernheim, 1996). Thus, where pecuniary emulation is conspicuous consumption motivated by the desire to be associated with an aspirational reference group (approach), invidious

comparison arises from the motivation to distinguish oneself from an avoidance reference group (avoidance; Bagwell & Bernheim, 1996; Hudders, 2012; Levy, 1959; Mason, 1980).

While class is arguably considered to be less of an issue in modern society, the phenomenon described by Veblen is still evident today (Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982). Consumers emulate celebrities by purchasing brands they endorse in an attempt to be perceived as similar to them (Chan & Prendergast, 2008; Solomon, 2013). Moreover, consumers exposed to affluence on television have been found to try and imitate this affluence by consuming luxury goods (Dittmar, 1994; Hirschman, 1988; O'Guinn & Shrum, 1997; Vigneron & Johnson, 1999). Because of this, a number of authors have addressed the so named 'Veblen effects' of conspicuous consumption in a modern context (Bagwell & Bernheim, 1996; Braun & Wicklund, 1989; Corneo & Jeanne, 1997; Eastman et al., 1999; Hopkins & Kornienko, 2004; Wiedmann et al., 2009), particularly because Veblen effects are considered to be significant in markets for luxury goods (Bagwell & Bernheim, 1996). Most notably, Corneo and Jeanne (1997) modelled the impact of Veblen effects on consumer demand. In this research, the authors explore conformism (invidious comparison) and snobbism (pecuniary emulation) as incentives for conspicuous consumption. Here, conspicuous consumption motives are defined as "the desire not to be identified with the poor and the desire to be identified with the rich" (Corneo & Jeanne, 1997, p. 56). Levy (1959) explains this as individual using symbols as a means of indicating participation, or non-participation, in a particular social groups. By selectively purchasing goods that are evident of their willingness and ability to pay premium prices for functionally equivalent goods, consumers are able to advertise and signal wealth (Bagwell & Bernheim, 1996; Griskevicius et al., 2007; Hudders, 2012; Lichtenstein et al., 1993), or at least the illusion there of. Materialistic individuals have been found to judge the success of themselves and others based on the material possessions owned, and their consumption lifestyles (Rassuli & Hollander, 1986; Richins & Dawson, 1992). This was referred to by Richins and Dawson (1992, p. 304) as 'possession-defined success' where consumers evaluate "others and themselves in terms of their consuming life-styles", value material goods for their monetary worth, and where possessions are considered "evidence of success" and abundance (see also Du Bois, 1955; Heilbroner, 1956; Rassuli & Hollander, 1986). Furthermore, Griskevicius et al. (2007, p. 87) considered conspicuous consumption in humans akin to a "peacock's conspicuous display of his tail", where public display of luxuries is a form of social competition for prestige. In this context, utility is derived from conspicuous

consumption by seeking to exceed consumption levels of others in order to achieve a superior status position (Chao & Schor, 1998). Much like conspicuous animal mating displays, consumption in this manner serves a communicative function (Griskevicius et al., 2007). In keeping with this research, a number of papers have noted the significance of the public nature of goods used to satisfy conspicuous and status motives (Chao & Schor, 1998; Han et al., 2010; Hudders, 2012; Vigneron & Johnson, 1999). However, public goods are in fact significant in satisfying motives arising from appearance and achievement vanity.

2.4.4 Public Luxuries and Appearance and Achievement Driven Consumption

Only those goods that are consumed publicly are believed to yield status for an individual (Lertwannawit & Mandhachitara, 2012; Lichtenstein et al., 1993; Wiedmann et al., 2009). This is because consumption aimed at the communication of information to others "only occurs with publically visible products" (Chao & Schor, 1998, p. 107) or 'loud' brands (Han et al., 2010). Research by Hudders (2012) is supportive of this in finding that individuals believe it is more important to use public goods to signal information to aspirational reference groups compared to privately consumed goods. Thus, publicly visible products play a central role in the portrayal of the self-concept motivated by appearance and achievement vanity (Hyatt, 1992). The significance of social visibility is believed to arise from the ability of public goods to mitigate the moral hazard associated with non-public consumption (Chao & Schor, 1998). Due to social status acquisition associated with achievement and appearance consumption, consumers are presented with an incentive to exaggerate consumption behaviours to others (Chao & Schor, 1998). In the case of privately consumed goods, actual consumption behaviour is not always verifiable by others and thus private consumption as reported by the individual lacks credibility (Chao & Schor, 1998). Therefore, visibility of consumption is important if consumers want to gain recognition, acceptance and approval from reference groups (Dolich, 1969; O'Cass & McEwen, 2006) when acceptance and approval is absent in the case of privately consumed goods (Hudders, 2012; Vigneron & Johnson, 1999). Moreover, where vain consumers are concerned with their social image and outdoing others, determination of whether they have been successful is only possible through some sort of evaluation.

2.5 SOCIAL COMPARISON

2.5.1 Introduction to Social Comparison

According to Festinger (1954), individuals have an innate drive to evaluate their abilities or opinions (Dahl, Argo, & Morales, 2012). Such an evaluation, when objective sources for assessment are not available, is only possible by comparing the self to others (Festinger, 1954). Such a process is known as social comparison and has since been explored by a number of researchers (Dahl et al., 2012; Huang, Lin, Yang, & Huang, 2013; Richins, 1991; Wood, 1989). Thus, the process of social comparison involves a consideration of how "information about others relates to the self" (Workman & Lee, 2011, p. 308). By observing others, we are able to observe ourselves and by transference how we are perceived by others (Levy, 1982). Individuals, in this instance, are attempting to identify similarities or differences between the self and another on some attribute (Workman & Lee, 2011). While Festinger's (1954) original hypotheses considered the evaluation of abilities and opinions, further research shows that comparison also occurs in the process of evaluating personal traits and circumstances (Richins, 1991; Wood, 1989) and personal possessions (Chan & Prendergast, 2008; Marcoux et al., 1997; Solomon, 1983). Thus, social comparison includes the evaluation of a number of attributes of the self-concept (Richins, 1991), whether they are abilities, opinions, traits, possessions or circumstances, by comparison to others to determine whether a discrepancy is present (Richins, 1991). In other words, social comparison encompasses the evaluation of any aspect of the self-concept or even a significant other (Gibbons & Buunk, 1999). Moreover, this evaluative process is also used by individuals to assign social identity to themselves (Solomon, 1983), and to ascertain the social status of others (Chan & Prendergast, 2008). The importance of the aspect of the self-concept being evaluated to an individual also impacts on the importance of the comparison and result (Festinger, 1954). Determination of whether a discrepancy is present enables individuals to determine their relative position to others in terms of the attribute in question (Workman & Lee, 2011). When social comparison results in the identification of a discrepancy, individuals are more motivated to actively seek ways to reduce the divergence if the ability or opinion being assessed, and/or the appeal of the individual or group for which comparison is being made, has some significance for the individual (Festinger, 1954). This comparison provides individuals with social information that influences how they think and feel about themselves (Dahl et al., 2012). Generally, social comparison impacts on perceptions

and feelings about the self-concept (Richins, 1991). If divergence is apparent, individuals will then seek ways to reduce this in order to improve the self (Wood, 1989). In many cases the social information arising from this process facilitates consumption decisions which are used to alleviate discrepancies (Dahl et al., 2012). The nature and significance of such divergence depends on the individuals with whom the self is compared, and the attribute being evaluated.

2.5.2 Candidates for Social Comparison

Candidates for social comparison were considered by Festinger to be those who are not too divergent from the self, and who are perceived as similar to the self in some way (Festinger, 1954; Workman & Lee, 2011). Festinger (1954) also believed that more significance is placed on comparison subjects if they are a part of the same reference or social group as the individual undergoing social comparison. However, research has since recognised that individuals undergo comparison with members of reference groups or social categories outside that of the individuals due to factors such as saliency and availability (Dahl et al., 2012), for example, models in advertising (Bearden & Etzel, 1982; Dahl et al., 2012; Harrison, Biljana, & Cornwell, 2001; Merton, 1957; Richins, 1991). Reference groups, beyond membership groups, are important in orienting consumer behaviour (Bearden & Etzel, 1982). Non-membership reference groups shape behaviour and evaluations and can be a key source of comparison subjects (Bearden & Etzel, 1982; Cocanougher & Bruce, 1971; Eze et al., 2012). Such groups serve a comparative function and serve as a point of comparison against which individuals can evaluate themselves or others (Cocanougher & Bruce, 1971). Comparative reference groups can influence attitudes, values and behaviour due to members of such groups representing standards for which individuals voluntarily make judgements and evaluations (Cocanougher & Bruce, 1971). Cocanougher and Bruce (1971) found that socially distant reference groups can be influential on consumers when favourable attitudes are held toward that reference group. Where normative influence of a reference groups requires enough interaction with an individual to determine conformity with group norms, comparative influence depends on the attractiveness of the group to the individual (Cocanougher & Bruce, 1971). However, group membership must be salient for group norms to impact on the behaviour and attitudes of individuals (Sharp, Voci, & Hewstone, 2011). This explains social comparison in which consumers compare themselves with celebrities (Chan & Prendergast, 2008). Advertising which uses celebrities or ‘distant others’ illustrates the assumption of marketing that individuals

are attracted to socially distant reference groups and that those groups exert enough influence to affect product aspirations or self-image formation (Cocanougher & Bruce, 1971; Eze et al., 2012).

Festinger's (1954) social comparison theory is directly applicable to the context of advertising (Richins, 1991). Situational factors, such as exposure to advertising, can result in transient changes in self-evaluation (Crocker & Schwartz, 1985; Crocker, Thompson, McGraw, & Ingerman, 1987; Heatherton & Polivy, 1991; Luhtanen & Crocker, 1992). In this context, comparison subjects are imposed on consumers (Buunk, Collins, Taylor, VanYperen, & Dakof, 1990). Many studies suggest that consumers compare themselves with individuals presented in advertising and media messages (Cocanougher & Bruce, 1971; Dahl et al., 2012; O'Guinn & Shrum, 1997; Richins, 1991; Workman & Lee, 2011). Whether this comparison is carried out consciously or unconsciously is debatable (Richins, 1991), however the occurrence of social comparison upon exposure to advertising messages is widely accepted (Mandel et al., 2006; Richins, 1991). In this instance, individuals aren't always aware of comparing themselves to others and can involuntarily encounter comparison information (Festinger, 1954; Workman & Lee, 2011). Furthermore, Festinger (1954) believed that social comparison could only be carried out as a result of personal contact. However, social comparison does not require direct contact such is the case for people in advertising and media (Mandel et al., 2006; Workman & Lee, 2011). When individuals are exposed to idealised images in advertising and media (upward comparison conditions), negative consequences often ensue due to negative implications for self-perception, self-worth and resulting dissatisfaction with the self which often result in appearance management behaviours (Dahl et al., 2012; Lennon & Rudd, 1994; Mandel et al., 2006; Micu & Coulter, 2012; O'Guinn & Shrum, 1997; Richins, 1991; Workman & Lee, 2011; Yu, Damhorst, & Russell, 2011). Additionally, social comparison between an individual and an upward target conveyed through media has also been shown to lead to envy (Crusius & Mussweiler, 2012). In this instance, envy arises when media portrayal of superior others superior material possessions are made highly visible and recognisable (Crusius & Mussweiler, 2012). In some instances, envy can positively impact on consumers' willingness to pay for these goods (Crusius & Mussweiler, 2012).

2.5.3 Motivations for Social Comparison

Three motives for social comparison have been identified as self-evaluation, self-improvement, and self-enhancement (Chan & Prendergast, 2008; Gibbons & Buunk, 1999; Micu & Coulter, 2012; Wood, 1989). Where (1) self-evaluation is considered to be the assessment of aspects of one's self-concept whether abilities, personal traits or opinions; (2) self-improvement is when social comparison results in inspiration to improve on a particular attribute of the self-concept; and (3) self-enhancement refers to the biased attempts of an individual to maintain positive views of the self-concept to protect or enhance self-esteem (Micu & Coulter, 2012). These motivations arise from the intrinsic push to improve one's self and the way the self is perceived by others (Festinger, 1954; Workman & Lee, 2011). In Western culture in particular, individuals not only desire to evaluate their abilities, but feel pressure to improve them (Wood, 1989). This desire to improve and compare often leads to individuals aspiring to improve themselves past the position of the individual with whom they are comparing (Wood, 1989). Individual tendencies to engage in social comparison behaviour vary according to these motives (Gibbons & Buunk, 1999; Sharp et al., 2011; Wood, 1989). These individual differences are considered to be a result of an individual's desire to seek information regarding the self-concept of others (Gibbons & Buunk, 1999; Sharp et al., 2011). Additionally, the motive driving social comparison will to some extent dictate they type of social comparison an individual engages in. These types are upward, lateral, and downward comparison.

2.5.4 Types of Social Comparison

2.5.4.1 Upward

Upward comparison occurs when an individual compares themselves with others who are better-off (Buunk et al., 1990; Dahl et al., 2012; Huang et al., 2013; Lee & Workman, 2013; Micu & Coulter, 2012). Upward comparison is believed to equally serve all three social comparison motives (Micu & Coulter, 2012). For self-evaluation purposes, upward comparison is considered to be a "useful source of self-evaluative information" (Buunk et al., 1990, p. 1239). In such instances, self-esteem has been found to be negatively impacted (Dahl et al., 2012; Micu & Coulter, 2012; Wood, 1989). This phenomenon was found to be most common when the comparison target is engaged in behaviour aligned with the behaviour or self-concept

of the individual (Dahl et al., 2012). Such circumstances are referred to in the literature as 'normal' circumstances which are believed to illicit emotions such as envy (Crusius, 2009; Crusius & Mussweiler, 2012) as comparisons arising from these conditions force individuals to confront their own inferiority (Micu & Coulter, 2012). In contrast, self-improvement is most effectively carried out through upward comparison, which leads to increased self-esteem (Micu & Coulter, 2012). This difference in outlook is believed to arise from whether or not the upward comparison was by choice, as upward comparison outcomes are more positive when comparison was intentional (Suls et al., 2002). It is believed that in situations of high stress, individuals will seek upward comparison targets as a source of inspiration and encouragement (Buunk et al., 1990; Micu & Coulter, 2012; Suls et al., 2002; Taylor & Lobel, 1989). Furthermore, consumer engagement in upward comparison have been found to be positively related to higher purchase intentions and desire for more material possessions (Chan & Prendergast, 2008)

2.5.4.2 Lateral

Lateral comparison occurs when individuals compare themselves with others who are perceived as similar to the self in some way (Huang et al., 2013; Micu & Coulter, 2012). Individuals most commonly engage in lateral comparison to satisfy self-evaluation motives (Micu & Coulter, 2012). This is due to comparison with a similar others is "maximally informative" as it provides a more precise evaluation (Festinger, 1954; Taylor & Lobel, 1989, p. 569). Despite Festinger's original hypotheses referring to comparison with similar others, little research acknowledges lateral level comparison.

2.5.4.3 Downward

Downward comparison occurs when an individual compares themselves with others who are worse-off (Buunk et al., 1990; Dahl et al., 2012; Huang et al., 2013; Lee & Workman, 2013; Micu & Coulter, 2012). Of the three motives for social comparison, self-enhancement is considered to the most significant in driving downward comparison (Buunk et al., 1990; Micu & Coulter, 2012). This is believed to be due, in part, to the positive affect required for self-enhancement (Buunk et al., 1990; Crocker & Schwartz, 1985; Crocker et al., 1987), as comparison with worse-off others enables an individual to maintain positive views of their self-concept (Taylor & Lobel, 1989). Downward comparison is therefore usually considered to be a result, and cause of, increased self-esteem (Micu & Coulter, 2012; Suls et al., 2002).

Individuals who are high in self-esteem will undergo social comparison due to increased likelihood of favourable outcomes such as highlighting their superiority over others (Buunk et al., 1990; Crocker & Schwartz, 1985; Crocker et al., 1987; Dahl et al., 2012). Similarly, individuals in low self-esteem seek to limit damaging comparisons, increase self-protection, bolster satisfaction, and minimise exposure of their shortcomings (Allan & Gilbert, 1995; Chan & Prendergast, 2008; Luhtanen & Crocker, 1992). Individuals who are in stressful or threatening situations are more likely to strategically engage in downward comparison as exposure to less fortunate others "boosts subjective well-being" (Suls et al., 2002, p. 161) and is considered a "safe opportunity to revel in their success" (Wood et al., 1994, p. 729).

2.5.5 Assimilative and Contrastive Outcomes

Despite a growing body of research on social comparison, Suls et al. (2002) explains that it is unclear what determines social comparison outcomes. This is believed to be because social comparison types are not always intrinsic to the direction of the outcome (Buunk et al., 1990; Suls et al., 2002). For example, a downward comparison can lead to either a positive or a negative evaluation, as such a comparison communicates that an individual's current standing is relatively advantaged, and that such a position could always decline (Suls et al., 2002). Similarly, upward comparison can communicate that an individual is relatively disadvantaged, and that their situation could improve (Suls et al., 2002). The outcome and affective consequence of social comparison is therefore believed to be dependent on interpersonal differences in terms of what aspects of the comparison are salient (Suls et al., 2002; Wood, 1989). In this light, social comparison can yield an assimilative or contrastive outcome (Mandel et al., 2006; Suls et al., 2002).

Assimilative outcomes are promoted by the understanding that an individual could always assume the relative positon of the comparison subject (Suls et al., 2002). Assimilation arises when information about the self that is congruent with the target is more cognitively accessible (Suls et al., 2002). In other words, when similarities between the self and the comparison target are salient, the individual recognises that their own situation could improve or decline to reflect that of the target. Such views are evident in stressful or threatening circumstances where individuals view upward comparison targets as inspiration due to the belief that they too can rise to the targets position (Buunk et al., 1990; Mandel et al., 2006). Pelham and Wachsmuth (1995) disclose that individuals who exhibit high certainty regarding their self-concept engage

in more heuristic information processing where information derived from comparison with someone for whom they are psychologically close, will be treated as a substitute for information about themselves when such evidence is lacking. Such comparison and information processing is therefore believed to give rise to assimilative outcomes (Pelham & Wachsmuth, 1995). Assimilative outcomes are therefore present in stressful or threatening situations where an upward comparison positively impacts on the individual, or when a downward comparison impacts negatively (Buunk et al., 1990; Mandel et al., 2006).

Contrastive outcomes are determined by the psychological relationship between the individual and the comparison target (Suls et al., 2002). Contrast arises when information about the self that is incongruent with the target is more cognitively accessible (Suls et al., 2002). In the absence of psychological closeness, divergence between the individual and the comparison target will be more salient. Research by Pelham and Wachsmuth (1995) reveals that individuals who are uncertain about a given aspect of their self-concept are more motivated for explicit evaluations for that attribute, thus leading to comparisons that highlight contrasts between the individual and the comparison target. Such comparison and information processing therefore gives rise to contrastive outcomes (Pelham & Wachsmuth, 1995). Contrastive outcomes are present when an upward comparison negatively impacts on the individual, or a downward comparison positively impacts on an individual's outlook and self-esteem (Mandel et al., 2006), and are believed to occur in 'normal' circumstances (Buunk et al., 1990).

The assimilative and contrastive outcomes described here are acted upon by individuals with respect to the self-regulatory system (Banister & Hogg, 2004). This system proposes that individuals moderate behaviour with reference to a desired or undesired end state (Banister & Hogg, 2004) as presented by the social comparison outcome. This framework suggests that there are two means for which individuals can mitigate any perceived discrepancies arising from comparison; (1) the divergence between current and desired states can be reduced; or (2) the divergence between undesired and current state can be increased (Banister & Hogg, 2004). When consumers are motivated to increase or establish divergence between the current and undesired self, consumers will actively 'disidentify' themselves with products and brands that are incongruent with this (Charmley et al., 2013). This process is characterised as self-monitoring or impression management (Charmley et al., 2013).

2.5.6 Role of Self-Esteem

Individual differences in personality or circumstances enable individuals to focus on positive versus negative outcomes of social comparison which can impact on the affective outcome (Buunk et al., 1990). Self-esteem in particular has been found to be one such personal trait (Allan & Gilbert, 1995; Dahl et al., 2012). Research has long since acknowledged the positive correlation between self-esteem and evaluations of others (Crocker & Schwartz, 1985; Ehrlich, 1974). It is most often assumed that consumers are unbiased in their engagement with social comparison. However, in most cases, individuals are able to selectively recall, or construe information pertaining to the self in such a way that comparison outcomes are consistent with the individual's expectations (Suls et al., 2002). Wood (1989) reports individuals selectively interpreting, distorting, and ignoring information so that social comparison outcomes are skewed in their favour. Thus, consumers are not always unbiased evaluators but will manipulate social comparison outcomes in instances when the social environment is unyielding in order to satisfy individuals' goals (Wood, 1989). Such goals, in most cases, pertain to the protection or enhancement of power and self-esteem. Power, for example, has been found to affect comparison responses where individuals who are high in power believe they have the means to favourably improve their current standing or to avoid unfavourable reduction in their current standing (Buunk et al., 1990). Individuals have been found to actively avoid a comparison in an attempt to protect self-esteem (Micu & Coulter, 2012). The same studies suggest that low self-esteem individuals consider both upward and downward comparisons as unfavourable and will avoid comparison for this reason. However, Buunk et al. (1990) suggests that a more general explanation is that high self-esteem results in individuals engaging in comparisons that will provide favourable outcomes, regardless of the direction of the outcome. Such individuals will actively avoid threatening comparisons. Similarly, individuals who are low in self-esteem interpret comparison outcomes negatively, regardless of their relative standing to the comparison subject (Buunk et al., 1990). Though this research is in some ways converse to findings regarding contrastive and assimilative outcomes, it is evident that self-esteem plays an important role in motivations for, and reactions to, social comparison in some way (Dahl et al., 2012). Furthermore, social aspects of self-esteem have been found to correlate with public self-consciousness and social anxiety, thus suggesting that evaluations of individuals' public image can give rise to anxiety and self-consciousness (Heatherton & Polivy, 1991).

2.6 SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS

2.6.1 Introduction to Self-Consciousness

According to Fenigstein, Scheier, and Buss (1975), self-awareness or self-examination is where individuals are able to recognise their thoughts and motivations. Where some individuals are more likely to engage in this behaviour over others, some individuals scrutinise their behaviour to the point of obsession (Fenigstein et al., 1975). Those individuals who have a tendency to direct their thoughts inward or outward are considered by Fenigstein et al. (1975), to be self-conscious. Where self-awareness is a state of self-directed attention as a result of situational variables and/or disposition, self-consciousness is solely considered a trait (Fenigstein et al., 1975). Fenigstein et al. (1975, p. 523), identified three factors of self-consciousness; (1) private self-consciousness is the tendency of the individual to turn attention inward; (2) public self-consciousness is the awareness of the self as a social object that impacts on others; and (3) social anxiety is a "discomfort in the presence of others". Whether an individual's attention is directed inward or outward, self-consciousness influences how individuals regulate behaviour, impression management, portrayal of self-concept, and situational attention (Sharp et al., 2011).Where the first two factors are considered to be processes of self-examination where one is a cognitive mulling over the self and the other is an awareness of the self as a social stimulus, social anxiety is considered a response to self-consciousness (Fenigstein et al., 1975).

2.6.2 Social Anxiety

Social anxiety was identified by Fenigstein et al. (1975) as a factor of self-consciousness. The social aspect of such anxiety arises from the fact that it is "aroused and intensified by other people" (Schlenker & Leary, 1982, p. 641). Social anxiety is said to arise when consumers are motivated to make favourable impressions with reference groups but feel that they are unable to do so (Schlenker & Leary, 1982). In this instance, unsatisfactory evaluations from reference groups are perceived or imagined (Schlenker & Leary, 1982). Previous research has noted that social anxiety generally has two factors corresponding to either a situation in which an individual's behaviour is evaluated and scrutinised by others, or a situation where an individual's behaviour has already been evaluated as inadequate by others (Schlenker & Leary,

1982). In any case, social anxiety is anxiety arising from the "prospect or presence of personal evaluation in real or imagined social situations" and is produced by any sense of perceived failure to control one's social environment and events (Schlenker & Leary, 1982, p. 642). Such social situations are those in which individuals can potentially fall under scrutiny or become a focal point for others (Schlenker & Leary, 1982). Such situations give rise to anxiety due to individuals experiencing a cognitive or affective response characterised as apprehensive, regarding a potentially negative outcome that individual believes in unavoidable (Schlenker & Leary, 1982). While some studies consider social anxiety to arise from a cognitive self-evaluation, insufficient or inappropriate social skills, or as an outcome of conditioning, many studies, in contrast to Fenigstein et al. (1975), adopt social anxiety as a personality trait (Schlenker & Leary, 1982). However, as noted by Fenigstein et al. (1975), social anxiety is a result of self-consciousness. Individuals who are more motivated to impress others or are publicly self-conscious will be more likely to experience social anxiety (Fenigstein et al., 1975).

2.6.3 Public Self-Consciousness

When an individual is privately self-conscious and attention is directed inward, behaviour is aligned with maintenance of the self-concept (Sharp et al., 2011). Conversely, when an individual is publicly self-conscious and attention is focused on how they are perceived by others as a social stimulus, the individuals concerns and behaviour will be directed toward impression management and conforming to social norms (Sharp et al., 2011). Publicly self-conscious individuals are therefore more responsive to the expectations of others, social cues, are more susceptible to interpersonal influence, and have greater willingness to seek approval from others regardless of congruence with own beliefs (Sharp et al., 2011). This arises because individuals high in public self-consciousness place more importance on the opinions of others, particularly aspirational reference groups (Sharp et al., 2011).

Publicly self-conscious individuals have been found to show concern for creating favourable impressions and seeking approval from others using self-presentation (Bloch & Richins, 1992; Workman & Lee, 2011). Consumers are able to symbolise their self-concept by being self-conscious (Levy, 1982). Those individuals who are publicly self-conscious have been reported as being acutely aware of attention from others, how they are regarded by others, and show increased responsiveness to interpersonal evaluation and social comparison (Schlenker &

Leary, 1982). Due to appearance playing a key role in impression formation, individuals who have a higher concern for, and place more emphasis on appearance are more likely to use embellishments, such as clothing, to enhance it (Bloch & Richins, 1992; Workman & Lee, 2011). In doing so, individuals use publicly consumed goods, including fashion products, to convey information to others and create favourable comparisons (Hudders, 2012; Workman & Lee, 2011). Ultimately, public self-consciousness results in individuals attending to the aspects of the self that are public and observable to others (Sharp et al., 2011).

2.6.4 Susceptibility to Interpersonal Influence and Self-Monitoring

Self-consciousness was used by Vigneron and Johnson (1999) to represent consumers' responses to social influence. As self-consciousness is the extent to which individual's direct attention inward or outward, it is believed that publicly self-conscious individuals who are concerned about how they are perceived by others are more likely to be susceptible to interpersonal influence (Vigneron & Johnson, 1999). Furthermore, as noted by Wiedmann et al. (2009), individuals motives for luxury product consumption varies depending on their susceptibility to interpersonal influence. As self-consciousness is considered a surrogate indicator of consumers' susceptibility to interpersonal influence, an individual's inclination toward public or private self-consciousness affects decision processes regarding brand and product selection (Vigneron & Johnson, 1999). Self-consciousness, as indicated by susceptibility to interpersonal influence, is believed to impact on both status and conspicuous motives (O'Cass & McEwen, 2006).

In addition to susceptibility to interpersonal influence, self-monitoring is also considered to affect the extent to which consumers are concerned with maintaining a front, or moderating their social image (O'Cass, 2001; O'Cass & McEwen, 2006). Self-monitoring is the "degree to which an individual observes and controls their expressive behaviour and either maintains or adapts self-presentation depending on certain social cues, triggering situationally appropriate behaviour" (Gould, 1993; Lee & Workman, 2013; O'Cass, 2001; O'Cass & McEwen, 2006, p. 29; Snyder & DeBono, 1985). High self-monitors are interested in maintaining appearances and image and are likely to engage in 'face-saving' behaviour arising from social anxiety (Schlenker & Leary, 1982). High self-monitors are therefore sensitive to interpersonal influence (O'Cass, 2001; O'Cass & McEwen, 2006). This arises from high self-monitors being sensitive to social and interpersonal cues of "situational appropriateness" and having the capacity to

respond to cues from reference groups (Lee & Workman, 2013, p. 69). These individuals place more emphasis on consuming conspicuously and they are acutely aware of their appearance and status and exhibit high vanity-concern (O'Cass & McEwen, 2006; Sullivan & Harnish, 1990). Expression of identity by appearance and impression management is a manifestation of self-monitoring arising from the ability to modify self-presentation to increase appropriate appearances that will yield favourable comparisons with others (Lee & Workman, 2013). Thus, self-moderation impacts on consumer preferences for prestige and appearance as evident in their product choices (O'Cass, 2001).

2.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter provided a theoretical background for the main areas of interest in the present research. Specifically, this chapter introduced the construct of the self-concept including how individuals go about enhancement and maintenance of the self-concept and compensate in circumstances of uncertainty. This chapter also addressed the vanity literature and resulting motivations behind purchase consideration for luxury products including the driving forces of appearance and achievement consumption. This was followed by the exploration of social comparison and self-consciousness literature. Motivations behind social comparison and the resulting impact on the self-concept and consumer behaviour was addressed as well as implications for self-consciousness on the social comparison and self-completion process. The consideration of this literature provides the foundation for this research and enables the formation and introduction to the conceptual model being examined. This conceptual model, the illustrated dependence relationships, and resulting hypotheses are presented in the proceeding chapter.

3 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND HYPOTHESES

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the conceptual model that was investigated in this research. The chapter starts by presenting the conceptual model and explains the underpinning theory used to formulate the model. A discussion of dependence relationships follows in conjunction with specific research hypotheses. Lastly, the chapter presents the covariate variables that were considered.

3.2 PROPOSED CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The conceptual model used in this research is presented in Figure 3.1. The conceptual model was formulated using the vanity and social comparison literature discussed in Chapter Two. The conceptual model is centred on the social comparison, achievement and appearance vanity literature while using the self-esteem, symbolic consumption, and self-consciousness literature in support. Workman and Lee (2011) already discuss the interaction of social comparison, vanity and self-consciousness in terms of differences in gender and consumer groups as well as implications of self-consciousness. However, the relationship between these variables in driving consumption behaviour has not yet been empirically tested. This research expands on their recommendations and discussion on the cumulative effect of these variables on consumer behaviour by drawing on the relevant literature.

This research aims to answer the research objectives outlined in Chapter One (see Section 1.3) using an experimental design, where respondents will be exposed to different manipulations using a 3x2 between-subjects factorial design. The conceptual model as illustrated in Figure 3.1 has been developed to show the relationships between applicable independent and dependent variables. The hypothesised relationships, as illustrated in this model, are explained later in this chapter.

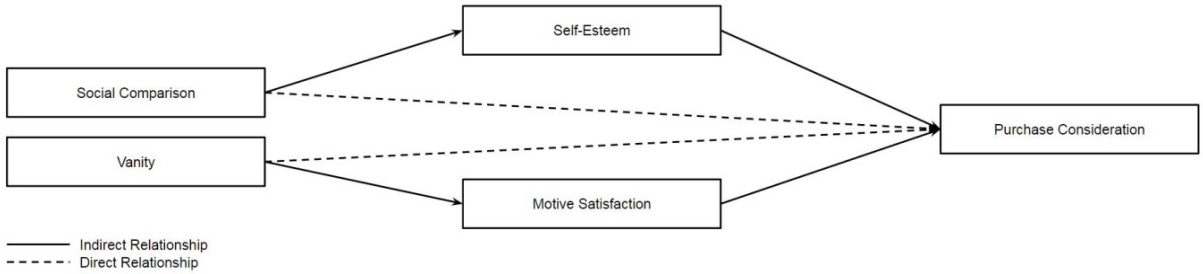

Figure 3.1: Proposed Conceptual Model

3.2.1 Conceptual Paradigm

This conceptual model uses the literature presented in Chapter Two to predict relationships in the present research. The conceptual model is built upon the relationships proposed by Workman and Lee (2011) with respect to social comparison and vanity. Additionally, the self-concept literature, with a focus on self-enhancement and compensatory behaviour is used to supplement these relationships in the context of product evaluation and purchasing behaviour. Here, Social Comparison is hypothesised to affect the motivation to alter the divergence between an individual and a comparison target and improve the way in which the self is perceived (Festinger, 1954; Workman & Lee, 2011). This motivation will arise from the impact Social Comparison has on an individual's Self-Esteem (Micu & Coulter, 2012). Experimentally biased social comparisons have been reported as being able to manipulate and change individuals' self-esteem (Heatherton & Polivy, 1991). Specifically, in situations where physical appearance is made salient such as advertising messages, appearance aspects of self-esteem are considerably most sensitive (Heatherton & Polivy, 1991). For example, when an individual is presented with an upward target (an attractive model in advertisement), the individual is predicted to be motivated to seek ways in which to reduce divergence and compensate for perceived short-comings in the self-concept, and negative impacts on self-esteem, through consumption (Wood, 1989).

Vanity is hypothesised to affect the motivation to control the way in which an individual is perceived by others (Wang & Waller, 2006; Wiedmann et al., 2011). Vanity appeals pertaining to Appearance or Achievement Vanity are proposed to motivate individuals to purchase a product on the basis that they serve expressive motives arising from corresponding vanity types. For example, an achievement appeal regarding a product in an advertising message will result in that product being evaluated as satisfying expressive motives such as conspicuous and status consumption that arise from an individuals need to communicate achievement aspects of

the self-concept (Durvasula et al., 2001). If the appeal is successfully evaluated in the way intended, combined with the increased desire for self-congruence arising from Social Comparison, then purchase behaviour will be more likely. Given the context and focus of the present research, Purchase Consideration was used to operationalise consumption behaviour.

Furthermore, Public Self-Consciousness is considered to affect the concern individuals have on Social Comparison outcomes and expression of Vanity. Specifically, individuals who are high in Public Self-Consciousness are more likely to engage in self-presentational behaviour such as the portrayal of appearance and achievement (Workman & Lee, 2011). Individuals who are high in Public Self-Consciousness are also more likely to engage in Social Comparison, pay more attention to comparison outcomes, and express more concern for alleviating unfavourable evaluations (Workman & Lee, 2011). Using the social comparison and vanity literature, this model predicts several dependence relationships between the variables.

3.2.2 Dependence Relationships

The conceptual model was based on self-evaluation arising from Social Comparison and self-concept development which formed the main focus of this research. It is predicted that when a consumer views an advertisement with an Upward comparison target (a 'normal' circumstance), a contrastive outcome will eventuate and divergence will be most salient (Buunk et al., 1990; Suls et al., 2002). The contrastive outcome will negatively impact on the individual's Self-Esteem which will in turn motivate them to alleviate feelings of dissatisfaction and incongruence with their desired state (Micu & Coulter, 2012). As per social comparison and self-regulation theory, individuals will moderate their behaviour with reference to an aspirational or desired end-state (Banister & Hogg, 2004). In this case, the desired point of reference is an attractive model in the advertising message (Cocanougher & Bruce, 1971; Eze et al., 2012). As such, Upward Comparison will result in a desire to improve the way the self is perceived through compensatory self-symbolising consumption (Chan & Prendergast, 2008). However, this compensatory behaviour and purchase behaviour does not occur for Downward or Lateral Comparison according to previous research, due to the lack of unfavourable comparison outcomes and positive implications for self-esteem (Micu & Coulter, 2012; Taylor & Lobel, 1989).

In this research, Vanity is used to explain the way in which products are evaluated as serving expressive motives arising from Appearance or Achievement appeals. Specifically, appeals

made to Vanity are believed to determine which evaluative criteria are made salient for an advertised product. Products that are evaluated as effectively satisfying these criteria will yield higher Purchase Consideration than those products not evaluated favourably as vanity is considered to influence purchase behaviour (Durvasula et al., 2001). Furthermore, it is predicted that Vanity combined with Upward Social Comparison will increase Purchase Consideration when used in an advertising message. Specifically, appeals to Achievement Vanity are considered to be a major driver for luxury fashion consumption and favourable product evaluation, due to communication of achievement being an important criterion for consumers (Netemeyer et al., 1995; Workman & Lee, 2011). Therefore, Achievement appeals will produce higher Purchase Consideration then Appearance Appeals. Additionally, Public Self-Consciousness will impact on the susceptibility of individuals to Social Comparison and Vanity appeals.

3.3 RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

Five research hypotheses were formulated for this research. Hypothesis One was based on the relationship between Social Comparison and Self-Esteem. Hypothesis Two was based on the relationship between Vanity and corresponding Motive Satisfaction measures. Hypotheses Three and Four examine the relationships between Self-Esteem and Motive Satisfaction on Purchase Consideration. Lastly, Hypothesis Five is based on the interaction of Vanity and Social Comparison on purchase consideration. The hypotheses and their theoretical foundation are further discussed in this section.

3.3.1 Hypothesis One: The Relationship between Social Comparison and Self-Esteem

Research shows that in normal circumstances, such as exposure to media and advertising, Social Comparison will result in a contrastive outcome (Buunk et al., 1990). Contrastive outcomes can have negative implications for Self-Esteem (Mandel et al., 2006), due to incongruence between the self and comparison target being most salient (Suls et al., 2002). Where consumers are exposed to Upward targets, Self-Esteem is negatively impacted as consumers are confronted with their own inferiority (Micu & Coulter, 2012). Conversely, when consumers are exposed to Downward targets, Self-Esteem is positively impacted in the case of contrastive outcomes because these types of comparisons bolster subjective well-being (Suls et

al., 2002; Taylor & Lobel, 1989). In other words, as Social Comparison moves from a Downward target to an Upward target, implications for Self-Esteem are inverse resulting in a change from high Self-Esteem to low Self-Esteem. Hence,

H_1: Social Comparison has a negative relationship with Self-Esteem

3.3.2 Hypothesis Two: Relationship between Vanity and Motive Satisfaction

Depending on whether a Vanity Appeal is Appearance or Achievement oriented, the advertised product will be evaluated as serving expressive motives arising from the corresponding vanity type (e.g. Durvasula et al., 2001). As expressive motives arising from Achievement and Appearance Vanity all focus around self-presentational concerns with respect to the type of vanity being appealed to (Netemeyer et al., 1995; Workman & Lee, 2011), the Vanity Appeal will increase saliency of evaluative criteria pertaining to that appeal, which will correspond to a stronger relationship between that Appeal and a particular set of criteria, or Motive Satisfaction measure. Thus,

H_2: Vanity has a positive relationship with corresponding Motive Satisfaction dimensions

3.3.3 Hypothesis Three: Relationship between Self-Esteem and Purchase Consideration

Where Social Comparison results in negative implications for Self-Esteem, consumers will be motivated to seek congruence between the self and the desired self (as presented by the Upward Condition). This desire for congruence will evoke compensatory consumption behaviour and higher purchase intentions (Chan & Prendergast, 2008; Crusius & Mussweiler, 2012; Lennon & Rudd, 1994). This is supported in a number of studies which indicate that when Self-Esteem is negatively impacted, consumers will act to mitigate undesirable discrepancies arising from Social Comparison (Dahl et al., 2012; Festinger, 1954; Wood, 1989). This results in individuals being motivated to change their current circumstances in order to alleviate feelings of dissatisfaction with the self (Micu & Coulter, 2012). This is consistent with the self-regulatory literature in which individuals will actively seek ways of decreasing the perceived distance between the current and desired state, and increase perceived distance from an undesirable state (Banister & Hogg, 2004). Thus, self-esteem is a proxy for motivation to change. A negative effect on Self-Esteem resulting from the outcome of Social

Comparison (Heatherton & Polivy, 1991), will equate to greater motivation to increase congruence with current and desired states through consumption behaviour. Therefore,

H_3: Self-Esteem has a negative relationship with Purchase Consideration

3.3.4 Hypothesis Four: Relationship between Motive Satisfaction and Purchase Consideration

Vanity has been noted to influence consumers' purchase behaviour (Durvasula et al., 2001). Specifically, the communication of appearance and achievements aspects of the self is considered to directly pertain to the satisfaction of expressive motives. As such, appeals to aspects of Vanity in advertising messages are considered to produce product evaluations congruent with these expressive motives (Netemeyer et al., 1995; Workman & Lee, 2011). The motives considered here are those that arise from consumers' innate desire to portray appearance and achievement aspects of the self (Dittmar, 1994; Durvasula et al., 2001; Wiedmann et al., 2011). Such motives are considered in the literature to stimulate product demand (Corneo & Jeanne, 1997) and product favourable purchase intentions. Hence,

H_4: Motive Satisfaction has a positive relationship with Purchase Consideration

3.3.5 Hypothesis Five: Effect of Vanity and Social Comparison on Purchase Consideration

In order for an individual to consider purchasing a product, circumstances need to be present for the individual to seek congruence and compensation arising from Social Comparison (H_1 and H_3), and the product needs to be evaluated as successfully satisfying expressive motives arising from appeals to Vanity (H_2 and H_4). Upward Comparison is considered to have the greatest effect on Self-Esteem and therefore create the strongest need for compensation (Chan & Prendergast, 2008; Micu & Coulter, 2012). Furthermore, where appeals to Vanity give rise to evaluative criteria congruent with the corresponding Vanity type, Achievement Vanity is considered to produce higher Purchase Consideration due to being a dominant driver in the market for luxury fashion products (Netemeyer et al., 1995; Workman & Lee, 2011).

Therefore, beyond the relationships hypothesised previously, the interaction between Vanity and Social Comparison will also be examined. Thus,

H_5: Social Comparison and Vanity will have a significant effect on Purchase Consideration. Specifically, Upward Social Comparison and Achievement Vanity are predicted to lead to the highest level of Purchase Consideration.

3.4 COVARIATE VARIABLES

The effects of four covariate variables are considered in addition to the above hypothesised relationships. The potential effects of these variables on the dependent variables over and above the effects of the independent variables are discussed below.

3.4.1 Self-Consciousness

The first covariate is self-consciousness which is the extent to which individuals' direct attention inward or outward (Fenigstein et al., 1975). Both Social Comparison and Public Self-Consciousness are concerned with the tendency to which individuals are aware of others in relation to the self and reliance on social norms to moderate behaviour in public settings (Sharp et al., 2011). Public self-consciousness has been found to increase an individual's concern for social comparison (Schlenker & Leary, 1982) and the concern for the way an individual is perceived by others (Bloch & Richins, 1992). Additionally, publicly self-conscious individuals are more likely to place importance on appearance and achievement appeals and use clothing to improve the way they are perceived by others (Bloch & Richins, 1992; Workman & Lee, 2011). Due to these relationships, it is believed that Public Self-Consciousness will impact on Social Comparison and the effect of Vanity appeals in advertising (Sharp et al., 2011; Workman & Lee, 2011). This is predicted to arise from Public Self-Consciousness affecting individuals' inclination to engage in self-presentational behaviour.

3.4.2 Materialism

The second covariate is Materialism, which is defined by Belk (1984, p. 304) as the "importance a consumer attaches to worldly possessions" and is considered in the literature to have a significant impact on consumption behaviour (Belk, 1984; Froh, Emmons, Card, Bono,

& Wilson, 2011; Lertwannawit & Mandhachitara, 2012; Richins & Dawson, 1992). For the purpose of this study, Materialism was of interest due to implications for luxury fashion consumption (Hudders, 2012; Hudders & Pandelaere, 2012) and driving possession-related behaviour (Belk, 1984; Lertwannawit & Mandhachitara, 2012; O'Cass, 2001; Richins & Dawson, 1992; Wiedmann et al., 2011). As this study uses the context of public consumption for self-concept presentation, this research is interested in the impact of respondents' materialistic tendencies on the evaluative process and purchase consideration. It is expected that respondents' level of materialism will influence the importance of expressive motives for luxury product consumption (Hudders, 2012) as high materialism is associated with self-concept presentation and enhancement (Fitzmaurice & Comegys, 2006; Hudders, 2012; O'Cass, 2001, 2004; Wiedmann et al., 2011). Furthermore, highly materialistic consumers have been found to have lower levels of self-esteem, satisfaction and well-being (Fitzmaurice & Comegys, 2006; Froh et al., 2011; Richins & Dawson, 1992), be more inclined towards self-monitoring (Fitzmaurice & Comegys, 2006; O'Cass, 2001) and concern for achievement and appearance (Froh et al., 2011; O'Cass, 2001; Wiedmann et al., 2011). The present research is interested in these implications of materialistic traits on the conceptual model. It is expected that Self-Esteem, Motive Satisfaction and Purchase Consideration are affected by Materialism as well as manipulations of the independent variables.

3.4.3 Social Comparison Orientation

The third covariate variable acknowledged in this study is Social Comparison Orientation which is defined as a measure of "individual differences in social comparison" (Gibbons & Buunk, 1999, p. 129). Social Comparison Orientation may influence the way in which consumers respond to Social Comparison Conditions in advertising message presented in this research. Research shows that the tendency of an individual to engage in social comparison impacts on the attention paid to others (Sharp et al., 2011), the importance placed on conforming to social norms (Sharp et al., 2011), and the emphasis on image and material symbols (Lertwannawit & Mandhachitara, 2012). Consequently, Social Comparison Orientation is expected to impact on Social Comparison Outcome and perceptions of the manipulation of Social Comparison.

3.4.4 Vanity-Concern

The fourth covariate is Vanity-Concern, which represents the concern components of consumer vanity. That is, an individual's excessive concern for appearance and achievement (Netemeyer et al., 1995). Vanity-Concern will impact on the importance an individual places on the communication of appearance and achievement through possessions (Netemeyer et al., 1995; Wiedmann et al., 2011). Therefore, Vanity-Concern is predicted to influence the interpretation of Vanity appeals (manipulations; Wiedmann et al., 2011), and the weight placed on these appeals in determining Motive Satisfaction in the evaluative process.

3.5 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter explained and discussed the conceptual model used in the present research. After introduction of the model and an explanation of its theoretical foundation were presented, the hypotheses and dependence relationships were discussed. The following chapter builds on the model and hypotheses, and discusses the methodology adopted.

4 METHODOLOGY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the research methodology used to test the hypothesised relationships presented in Chapter Three. This chapter begins with an overview of the research and experimental design. The development of the stimuli used for the experiment is discussed as well as the development of the final questionnaire. The discussion of the experimental procedure is presented as well as the results of the pre-studies. Lastly, the pre-study procedure is explained and the results for the manipulation checks are presented along with any amendments made to the final experiment.

4.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

Social comparison is the process in which individuals evaluate the self through comparison to another, along any number of attributes. The three levels of social comparison are upward, lateral, and downward comparison. In this light, individuals can either perceive themselves as being positively dissimilar, equal, or negatively dissimilar to another. Using these dimensions, social comparison was induced and resulting discrepancy measured using a factorial experimental design.

Vanity is considered to relate to either achievement or appearance appeals or concerns. Where concern is internal to the individual, appeals are external and can be imposed on an individual. Thus, the effect of achievement and appearance appeals was measured. Print advertisements were found to be an appropriate vehicle for these manipulations.

4.3 EXPERIMENTAL DESIGN

A 3x2, between-subjects factorial design was adopted to test the effects of Social Comparison (Upward, Lateral, and Downward) and Vanity (Achievement and Appearance) on Purchase Consideration. Social Comparison and Vanity were manipulated as independent variables to produce six unique experimental conditions.

		Social Comparison		
		Upward	***Lateral***	***Downward***
Vanity Appeal	***Achievement***	Condition 1	Condition 2	Condition 3
	Appearance	Condition 4	Condition 5	Condition 6

Table 4.1: Experimental Manipulations

4.4 STIMULI DEVELOPMENT

4.4.1 Selection of Product and Brand

Sunglasses have been used in previous consumer behaviour studies pertaining to conspicuous consumption and symbolic communication (e.g. O'Cass & Frost, 2002; O'Cass & McEwen, 2006). Sunglasses are highly visible and therefore have the ability to be used for higher-level needs such has conveying information about the self (O'Cass & McEwen, 2006). As noted by O'Cass and McEwen (2006), consumers don't wear sunglasses to protect their eyes, but to conform to normative reference groups or to display image. They are also considered a high involvement product category and are sold by luxury fashion brands at medium to premium price points. Research has shown that sunglasses have been found to be both high in affective and cognitive purchase-decision involvement (Kim & Sung, 2009). Furthermore, sunglasses are evaluated as 'familiar' and 'relevant' to consumers (Polyorat, Alden, & Kim, 2007), making them an inclusive product group that the majority of consumers have had experience with. Thus, sunglasses are considered a suitable product for this study and consequently used for this research.

To reduce effects of using existing brands in the study, a new brand name and logo was developed. Research into up and coming sunglass brands with little to no widespread recognition was conducted. Eventually, a fictitious brand name 'Goyne' was found on a designer's website which was adopted as the brand name for this study. However, to reduce risk of recognition further a new logo was created and used in the advertisements (see Appendix 8.1.1).

4.4.2 Considerations for Developing Print Advertisements

Print advertisements were used in this research as vehicles for the experimental manipulations. Print advertisements have been used in previous research addressing similar

constructs as is the case for the experimental design run by Micu and Coulter (2012). As explained by Lee (2000), print advertisements are reader-paced and therefore allow stimuli to be present for as long as the reader desires, thus ensuring that ad information is available for processing as long as required by the viewer. Print advertisements also have high relevancy for the product category being used as it is highly visual (Wiley et al., 2007). Sunglass brands, particularly luxury brands, often use print advertisements in billboard or magazine format. For the purpose of this research, landscape advertisements with a two by three ratio were used to emulate billboard and double page spread magazine advertisements. Additionally, print advertisements allow for all participants experience stimuli in the same way without being subject to internet connection and video quality which is important for an online study such as this one. The landscape format also allows for optimised utilisation of respondent's screens.

4.4.3 Developing the Advertisements

To create the six different manipulations outlined in Table 4.1, six different Goyne advertisements were developed. Each of the six advertisements was created to capture levels of Social Comparison and Vanity. For the advertisements to be as realistic as possible, existing premium and luxury sunglass advertisements were examined. Common elements were identified and were used to inform the advertisement development process. Key elements were; a simple, but dominant logo; monochromatic colour scheme (black and white) with contrasts for emphasis (red); single (or at least one dominant) model; and limited use of copy. With this in mind, two examples of existing advertisements were used as the basis for advertisement development (see Appendix 8.1.2). All advertisements were designed to reflect the same style and similar layout to reduce confounding results (Micu & Coulter, 2012).

4.4.4 Determining Levels and Manipulating Social Comparison

In the literature, Social Comparison has been identified as having three levels, that of; Upward Comparison with superior others; Lateral Comparison with similar others; and Downward Comparison with inferior others (Festinger, 1954; Huang et al., 2013; Micu & Coulter, 2012; Richins, 1991; Suls et al., 2002). Suls et al. (2002) notes that experimental research comparing upward and downward comparisons were inconclusive due to studies failing to include a non-comparison control group. Without a baseline condition, the impact of upward and downward conditions on variables such as well-being and self-esteem are non-

discernible (Suls et al., 2002). Consequently, the current research acknowledges Social Comparison as being comprised of three distinct levels, and adopts the three levels perspective of Social Comparison.

Social Comparison was manipulated using Social Comparison levels outlined by Suls et al. (2002). Comparison levels are based on the relative standing of the person with whom the self is compared, on a related attribute (Suls et al., 2002). Where in-depth information about an individual is unavailable, such as advertising messages, it is believed that individuals will use physical cues as indicators of personal information in the social comparison process. Manipulations were chosen in such a way as to produce distinctiveness between conditions to discourage 'spill over' Suls et al. (2002). Distinctiveness between conditions enables different manipulations to act as anchors to product contrastive outcomes (Suls et al., 2002). Social Comparison was presented and manipulated visually through the use of different models (Micu & Coulter, 2012). Perceived similarity was manipulated by using models considered to be physically negatively/positively dissimilar, and similar to the target sample, in order to convey latent information about the model not able to be provided in the advertisements.

All advertisements for the manipulated conditions were developed using two pre-studies. The first pre-study was used to narrow down a pool of different models to be used in the advertisements. These were then tested in the second pre-study to select three models that were each representative of one of the social comparison levels. In both pre-studies, respondents were asked to record how they perceived the models in relation to the self. Further details on these pre-studies are discussed in Section 4.5 and Section 4.6.

The visual components of the advertisements and the way models were conveyed were adopted from existing advertisements for sunglasses mentioned in Section 4.4.3. Images of models were selected to reflect poses and positioning used in existing advertising material. Images were then edited in Adobe Photoshop and reduced to black and white. Selection and editing of images increased consistency between conditions, eliminated underlying effects of different colour schemes, and increased alignment with existing luxury fashion advertising.

4.4.5 Determining Levels and Manipulating Vanity

Many studies acknowledge Vanity as consisting of both Appearance and Achievement Vanity (Huang et al., 2013; Netemeyer et al., 1995; Wiedmann et al., 2011; Workman & Lee, 2011). Appearance Vanity is associated with concern for physical attractiveness, and

establishing and maintaining one's self-concept or identity (Netemeyer et al., 1995). Achievement Vanity, on the other hand, is associated with conspicuous consumption and the portrayal of success, status, wealth or achievement (Netemeyer et al., 1995). Due to consistency in the literature surrounding Achievement and Appearance components of Vanity, the current research adopts the same two-component perspective in the manipulation of Vanity in the experimental conditions.

Vanity was manipulated using the Vanity characteristics outlined by Netemeyer et al. (1995). Copy content of advertisements was selected as the medium for Vanity manipulations for consistency across experimental conditions. Copy content in the form of advertisement taglines appealing to Achievement and Appearance were developed and selected in the second pre-study. Multiple taglines were produced for each of the Vanity appeals. The taglines in the advertisements were developed by examining existing advertisements for sunglasses and using Achievement or Appearance coded key words. Respondents were asked to identify how the taglines conveyed the product in terms of Achievement or Appearance related qualities. Further details on this pre-study are discussed in Section 4.6.

4.5 PRE-STUDY ONE: PRELIMINARY IMAGE REDUCTION

To refine the number of images to be statistically tested further, a short pre-study in the form of a single question survey was conducted by a panel of seven experts. The expert panel consisted of postgraduate students from the University of Canterbury who were recruited via Facebook (see Appendix 8.2.1). The purpose of this survey was to reduce a selection of 20 pictures of models found on stock photo websites believed to capture the three social comparison levels (approximately six models per level with a couple of additional models), down to three models for each level. It was decided that three models for each level would be suitable to provide a range, for which quantitative methods would later be used for final selection of models (see pre-study two, Section 4.6). The 20 models used can be found in Appendix 8.2.2.

The survey presented respondents with all 20 models and asked to them drag-and-drop the images into groups. These groups were distributed along a seven-point Likert scale which asked participants how they felt the models compared with themselves (1 = 'definitely inferior to me', 2 = 'inferior to me', 3 = 'somewhat inferior to me', 4 = 'equal to me', 5 = 'somewhat superior to me', 6 = 'superior to me', 7 = 'definitely superior to me'). The mean scores for each

model were calculated and used to identify which models provided the strongest representation of the three Social Comparison levels. Models 12, 17 and 19 had the highest mean scores (mean = 5.20, 5.40, and 5.80 respectively) indicating a 'somewhat superior to me' to 'superior to me' ranking and upward comparison level. Models five, 10 and 20 had the lowest mean scores (mean = 2.40, 2.20, and 2.00 respectively) indicating a 'somewhat inferior to me' to 'inferior to me' ranking. However, after discussion with members of the expert panel, it was revealed that these three models were not truly considered to be representative of Downward Comparison but of Lateral Comparison. Therefore, the images identified from survey results were used for Upward and Lateral levels in pre-study two (see Section 4.6) and the selection of new models for Downward Comparison was conducted.

After consulting the expert panel, further search on stock photo websites was conducted to identify an additional three models for Downward Comparison. Two members from the expert panel assisted in the search and three models were selected that were considered to be 'negatively dissimilar to the self'. Models were chosen on the basis that they were physically attractive like the other models chosen and those found in fashion advertisements, but were perceived as negatively dissimilar due to attributes such as tattoos and facial piercings. The addition of these three models in conjunction with the six found in the initial survey component of pre-study one comprises the nine models used in pre-study two (see Appendix 8.3.3).

4.6 PRE-STUDY TWO: IMAGE AND COPY SELECTION

To identify models and taglines to be used in final questionnaire a second pre-study was conducted. The purpose of this pre-study was to identify a single model for each of the three Social Comparison levels, as well as a single tag line for both Achievement and Appearance appeals. Before participants were able to proceed with questionnaire they were presented with an Information Sheet (see Appendix 8.3.1), asked for participation consent, and were required to provide their gender and age. Once unsuitable candidates were screened out the survey commenced.

First, participants were randomly allocated to one of three Social Comparison conditions. Each condition contained the three images of the models identified in the previous pre-study (see Appendix 8.3.3), for which order of exposure was randomised to eliminate any order effect. Images were presented in isolation for five seconds before respondents were able to proceed to the next page. After exposure, participants were presented with a smaller image of

the same model accompanied by a question for a total of three questions. Each question pertained to a seven-point Social Comparison scale, the first of which was developed for this pre-study (see Table 4.2). The other two scales were adapted from Allan and Gilbert (1995; see Table 4.3) Taylor, Halstead, and Haynes (2010; see Table 4.4). Each of the three questions asks the participant to consider the model in the picture and indicate their level of agreement with the provided statements (for Likert scales) or to indicate the extent to which the model is different or similar to them (for semantic-differential scale). This format was repeated for all three images within each condition, for all three Social Comparison levels.

Coding	***Likert Items (agree/disagree)***
SC1_1	This woman is more socially successful than me
SC1_2	This women is more professionally successful than me
SC1_3	This woman has more friends than me
SC1_4	This woman is wealthier than me
SC1_5	This women has a better job than me
SC1_6	This woman is happier than me

Table 4.2: Likert Items for Social Comparison Scale One (SC1)

Factor	***Coding***	***Semantic-Differential Items***
Rank	SC2_1	Inferior/Superior
	SC2_2	Less Competent/More Competent
	SC2_6	Less Talented/More Talented
	SC2_7	Weaker/Stronger
	SC2_8	Less Confident/More Confident
Group Fit	SC2_4	Less Accepted/More Accepted
	SC2_5	Different/Same
	SC2_11	Outsider/Insider
Attractiveness	SC2_3	Less Likeable/More Likeable
	SC2_9	Less Desirable/More Desirable
	SC2_10	Less Attractive/More Attractive

Table 4.3: Semantic-Differential Items for Social Comparison Scale Two (SC2)

Coding	*Likert Items (agree/disagree)*
SC3_1	She is a lot like me
SC3_2	She hold beliefs that are similar to my own
SC3_3	She has attitudes that are similar to my own

Table 4.4: Likert Items for Social Comparison Scale Three (SC3)

Second, respondents were randomly allocated to one of two Vanity conditions. Each of the two conditions contained three tag lines coded for the corresponding condition (see Table 4.5). Three taglines were provided for each Vanity condition to provide a range of options that would be narrowed down using quantitative methods, in-keeping with Social Comparison model selection. Taglines were presented accompanied by a single question pertaining to a seven-point Likert Vanity scale adapted from the literature (Netemeyer et al., 1995; see Table 4.6). The question explains to participants that the tagline is to be placed on a print advertisement for sunglasses, and then asks the participant to indicate the extent to which they agree with the statements about the sunglasses provided. This format was repeated for all three taglines within the vanity condition, for both conditions.

Vanity Appeal	*No.*	*Tag Line*
Appearance	1	“Worth taking a close look”
	2	“All eyes on you”
	3	“Because image is everything”
Achievement	4	“Outshine all the rest”
	5	“Eye wear for winners”
	6	“An eye for success”

Table 4.5: Vanity Coded Taglines

Factor	*Coding*	*Likert Items (agree/disagree)*
Appearance	V_1	This product would make people notice how attractive I am
	V_2	This product would make my looks very appealing to others
	V_3	This product would make people envious of my good looks
	V_4	This product would show people that I am a very good looking individual
	V_5	This product would show that my body is sexually appealing
	V_6	This product would show that I have the type of body that people want to look at
Achievement	V_7	This product would show that in a professional sense, I am a very successful person
	V_8	This product would make my achievements highly regarded by others
	V_9	This product would show that I am an accomplished person
	V_10	This product would show that I am a good example of professional success
	V_11	This product would make others wish they were as successful as me

Table 4.6: Likert Items for Vanity Scale

4.6.1 Pre-Study Two Sample

For the second pre-test, students of the University of Canterbury were recruited using class email lists. Students were offered a chance to win one of three $50 Westfield vouchers as incentive to participate in the study (see Appendix 8.3.2). For this pre-study, six classes were emailed resulting in the exposure of 1,602 students to the invitation to participate. Only women aged 18 or older were asked to participate. In total, 136 people responded and participated in the study resulting in a response rate of 8.49%. Out of the 136 responses, 107 responses were deemed suitable for the analysis after incomplete or unsuitable responses were deleted.

4.6.2 Results

4.6.2.1 Social Comparison

Out of the 107 responses used for analysis, 38 were allocated to Upward, 36 to Lateral, and 33 to Downward Social Comparison conditions. Total scale means were calculated for each scale in each condition, and a One-Sample t test was conducted to compare total scale means

between the different models and the neutral point (test value = 4, 'neither agree nor disagree'). This test value was chosen so that a model whose mean had the largest, positive [negative] significant difference (Upward [Downward] Comparison) could be identified, as well a model whose mean had the smallest difference that was statistically equivalent to zero (Lateral Comparison). For the Upward Condition, model U3 (see Appendix 8.3.3) was found to have the highest total scale means across all three scales. The differences between these means and the test value were found to be statistically significant for all three scales (where $p < .05$). Similarly, for the Downward Condition, the differences between the total scale means and the test value were found to be statistically significant for all three scales at the .05 level for model D1. The total scale means for model D1 were also the lowest of the three downward models. For the Lateral Condition, model L3 was found to have total scale means that were the closest to the test value and the differences were not found to be statistically significant. Table 4.7 provides a summary of this analysis.

Condition/Model	***Scale***	***Mean***	***Mean Difference***	***Significance***
Upward/U3	SC1	5.09	1.09	.00
	SC2	5.05	1.05	.00
	SC3	3.14	-.86	.00
Lateral/L3	SC1	4.17	.17	.23
	SC2	4.13	.13	.25
	SC3	3.70	-.30	.14
Downward/D1	SC1	3.55	-.45	.01
	SC2	3.61	-.39	.01
	SC3	2.94	-1.06	.00

Table 4.7: Pre-Study One-Sample T Test Results for Social Comparison

4.6.2.2 Vanity

Out of the 107 responses used for analysis, 53 were allocated to Appearance and 54 to Achievement Vanity conditions. Total scale means were calculated for the Achievement and Appearance factors, and a One-Sample t test was conducted to compare total factor means between the two different conditions and the neutral point (test value = 4, 'neither agree nor disagree'). This test value was chosen so that, for each tag line within a condition, the highest scale mean, and mean difference could be identified as well as whether that mean was for Achievement or Appearance factors. For the Appearance condition, tagline two (see Table 4.5)

was found to have the highest scale mean for the Appearance factor and second lowest scale mean for the Achievement factor (by .0113). Though the Appearance factor mean for this tagline was less than the neutral point, the mean difference between the factor mean and the test value was the smallest and the mean difference for Achievement factor was high. This indicates that second Appearance tagline consistently scored low on Achievement items and highest on Appearance items. For the Achievement condition, tagline three was found to have the highest scale means for the Achievement factor and the lowest scale mean for the Appearance factor. Both mean differences between the Achievement and Appearance factors and the test value were the highest, both of which were statistically significant at the .05 level. This shows that the third Achievement tagline consistently scored highest on achievement items and lowest on Appearance items. Table 4.8 provides a summary of this analysis.

Condition/Tagline	***Factor***	***Mean***	***Mean Difference***	***Significance***
Appearance/Tagline 2	Appearance	3.81	-.19	.34
	Achievement	3.25	-.75	.00
Achievement/Tagline 6	Appearance	3.34	-.66	.00
	Achievement	4.58	.58	.00

Table 4.8: Pre-Study One-Sample T Test Results for Vanity

4.6.3 Final Stimuli Development

Overall, the t tests were successful in identifying a model for each Social Comparison level and a tagline for each Vanity appeal. Models U3 and L3 in the Upward and Lateral conditions, and the model D1 in the downward condition were identified as being the strongest options for each comparison level. The Upward and Downward models both yielded the largest, most significant difference from the neutral point and therefore were perceived as being the most different to the Lateral condition or the participant. The Lateral model was constantly evaluated as being similar to the respondents, where any difference from the neutral point was not found to be statistically significant. Therefore, Upward model U3, Lateral model L3, and Downward model D1 were used in the stimuli for the final questionnaire. Moreover, the third Social Comparison scale from Taylor et al. (2010) was found to consistently yield lower means than the other two scales. On the other hand, the first Social Comparison scale specifically developed for the pre-test was found to produce results consistent to that of Allan and Gilbert

(1995). Therefore, to reduce the number of items and time required for completion, both these scales were omitted from further questionnaires.

In terms of the Vanity taglines, the t tests revealed that tagline two and six were the best options for use in the final questionnaire for Appearance and Achievement respectively. Tagline six had the highest mean that was statistically higher than the neutral point for Achievement, and had the lowest scores for the Appearance factor indicating that it is effectively making an achievement appeal when used. Tagline two, though the best option for Appearance, was not found to produce a mean score statistically different from the neutral point for the Appearance factor. However, this tagline was found to yield a statistically significant, negative difference from the neutral point for the Achievement factor. This shows that though the Appearance appeal is weaker than it could be, it is consistently considered by respondents as not pertaining to Achievement. When used in a print advertising context, in conjunction with visual content and a larger sample size it is believed that both taglines will be able to produce consistent results. Therefore, tagline two six will be used in the stimuli for the final questionnaire for Appearance and Achievement conditions.

The models and taglines identified in this pre-study were combined to create six advertisements. Advertisements were designed to be reflective of existing advertising material as mentioned in Section 4.4.3. After consulting two members of the expert panel from pre-study one, most of the images of models used in this pre-study were considered of a suitable format to be used in final stimuli (i.e. landscape, single dominant model). The one exception was for the Downward model. The image of this model was in portrait format and, as per advice provided by the panel, was replaced with another image of the same model from the same photo-shoot that was landscape format which can be seen in Appendices 8.5.3 and 8.5.6. Final advertisements are presented in Appendix 8.5.

4.7 QUESTIONNAIRE DEVEOPMENT

4.7.1 Measures for Independent Variables

4.7.1.1 Social Comparison

Social Comparison has been measured in a number of ways such as through scales measuring attention to Social Comparison information (Chan & Prendergast, 2008), individual differences in Social Comparison and comparison orientation (Gibbons & Buunk, 1999),

attitude similarity (Taylor et al., 2010), and by measuring effects on mood and self-esteem (Wood et al., 1994). However, the Social Comparison scale developed by Allan and Gilbert (1995) which focuses on judgements of social rank, relative attractiveness and group fit was found to be more suitable for the current research. This scale forces respondents to make judgements on another individual, making it an effective scale for use as a manipulation check. Additionally, this scale was used in the second pre-study discussed above and was found to produce results consistent with Social Comparison manipulations. This three-factor, eleven-item, seven-point, semantic differential scale was adapted and is presented below in Table 4.9.

Factor	***Coding***	***Semantic-Differential Items***
Rank	SC_1	Inferior/Superior
	SC_2	Less Competent/More Competent
	SC_3	Less Talented/More Talented
	SC_4	Weaker/Stronger
	SC_5	Less Confident/More Confident
Group Fit	SC_6	Less Accepted/More Accepted
	SC_7	Different/Same
	SC_8	Outsider/Insider
Attractiveness	SC_9	Less Likeable/More Likeable
	SC_10	Less Desirable/More Desirable
	SC_11	Less Attractive/More Attractive

Table 4.9: Semantic-Differential Items for Social Comparison

4.7.1.2 Vanity

The widely cited Vanity scale developed by Netemeyer et al. (1995) consists of four factors measuring related Vanity traits; Physical-Concern, Physical-View, Achievement-Concern, and Achievement-View. This scale has been tested by a number of other authors for validity across cultures (Durvasula et al., 2001; Wang & Waller, 2006), and has been used in previous studies involving fashion (e.g. Workman & Lee, 2011). The original scale encompasses both Vanity-Concern and Vanity-View items measuring the extent to which individuals are concerned for, and view their own (physical) appearance and achievements. Therefore, the scale was reduced to include only Vanity-View items that were adapted to evaluate an individual's view of how the product in the advertisements would affect how their appearance and achievements are

viewed by others. The adapted two-factor, eleven-item, seven-point, Likert scale is presented in Table 4.10.

Factor	***Coding***	***Likert Items (agree/disagree)***
Appearance-View	VV_1	This product would make people notice how attractive I am
	VV_2	This product would make my looks very appealing to others
	VV_3	This product would make people envious of my good looks
	VV_4	This product would show people that I am a very good looking individual
	VV_5	This product would show that my body is sexually appealing
	VV_6	This product would show that I have the type of body that people want to look at
Achievement-View	VV_7	This product would show that in a professional sense, I am a very successful person
	VV_8	This product would make my achievements highly regarded by others
	VV_9	This product would show that I am an accomplished person
	VV_10	This product would show that I am a good example of professional success
	VV_11	This product would make others wish they were as successful as me

Table 4.10: Likert Items for Vanity-View

4.7.2 Measures for Dependent Variables

4.7.2.1 Self-Esteem

The perceived effect of advertising stimuli arising from Social Comparison on participants Self-Esteem will be measured using the Self-Esteem scale by Heatherton and Polivy (1991). While some studies have attempted to measure experimentally induced changed in Self-Esteem using self-evaluation Self-Esteem scales have produced mixed results (Heatherton & Polivy, 1991), many of the scales used measured traits of Self-Esteem or mood as a surrogate indicator for actual Self-Esteem (e.g. Baumeister & Tice, 1985; Kernis, Brockner, & Frankel, 1989). However, the scale developed by Heatherton and Polivy (1991) specifically measures short-lived changes in Self-Esteem, which was developed to be sensitive to manipulations from researchers and marketers. Moreover, this scale has been used in previous research to measure

impact and effectiveness of Social Comparison conditions (e.g. Micu & Coulter, 2012). The scale was kept in its original form with the removal of one item considered to not be relevant to the current study, the 19-item, seven-point, three-factor, Likert scale is presented in Table 4.11.

Factor	***Coding***	***Likert Items (agree/disagree)***
Performance	SE_1	I feel confident about my abilities
	SE_2	I feel that I am having trouble understanding things that I read *
	SE_3	I feel as smart as others
	SE_4	I feel confident that I understand things
	SE_5	I feel that I have less scholastic ability right now than others *
	SE_6	I feel like I'm not doing well *
Social	SE_7	I am worried about whether I am regarded as a success of a failure *
	SE_8	I feel self-conscious *
	SE_9	I feel displeased with myself *
	SE_10	I am worried about what other people think of me *
	SE_11	I feel inferior to others at this moment *
	SE_12	I feel concerned about the impression I am making *
Appearance	SE_13	I feel satisfied with the way my body looks right now
	SE_14	I feel that others respect and admire me
	SE_15	I am dissatisfied with my weight *
	SE_16	I feel good about myself
	SE_17	I am pleased with my appearance right now
	SE_18	I feel unattractive *
	SE_19	I am worried about looking foolish *

* = reverse coded items

Table 4.11: Likert Items for State Self-Esteem

4.7.2.2 Motive Satisfaction

The perceived Motive Satisfaction provided by the product advertised will be measured using three scales. As the motives of interest here are those pertaining to self-concept presentation, three scales were chosen that focused on a products ability to convey conspicuous consumption, status, social and identity information to others. The first is the Conspicuous and Status Consumption scale by O'Cass and McEwen (2006). Though the status consumption

scale by Eastman et al. (1999) was another candidate for this measure, it focuses on consumer traits and motivations for status consumption rather than the status of the product. Therefore, O'Cass and McEwen (2006) scale was adapted to the context of product advertising and the two-factor, 13-item, five-point, Likert scale is presented in Table 4.12.

Factor	***Coding***	***Likert Items (agree/disagree)***
Conspicuous	CC_1	This product would be noticed by others
	CC_2	This product is best used in the presence of others
	CC_3	This product would help me gain respect
	CC_4	This product would help me gain popularity
	CC_5	This product lets people know who I am
	CC_6	I want to be seen using this product
Status	CC_7	This product is a symbol of professional success
	CC_8	This product is a symbol of prestige
	CC_9	This product indicates my wealth
	CC_10	This product indicates my achievements
	CC_11	People who buy this product are interested in status
	CC_12	The status this product provides is important to me
	CC_13	This products status enhances my image.

Table 4.12: Likert Items for Conspicuous Consumption

The Social Value scale developed by Sweeney and Soutar (2001) and used in the study by Zhou, Yang, and Hui (2010) was considered a suitable measure of social signalling. The original scale by Sweeney and Soutar (2001) was a four factor scale measuring consumers' perceived value of a product. For the purpose of this research, the social factor of this scale was used. This social scale was adapted for this research, and the six-item, seven-point, Likert scale is presented below (see Table 4.13).

Coding	Likert Items (agree/disagree)
SV_1	This product would help me to feel accepted
SV_2	This product would help improve the way I am perceived
SV_3	This product would make a good impression on other people
SV_4	This product would give its owner social approval
SV_5	This product would help me feel trendy/up-to-date
SV_6	I think it is particularly appropriate to use this product in social contexts

Table 4.13: Likert Items for Social Value

Lastly, as the previous two scales show emphasis on societal value and conspicuous consumption motives a final scale was developed to provide a measure for identity motives. The original three factor scale developed by Tian et al. (2001) measured consumers Need for Uniqueness. For the purposes of this research, the Creative Choice factor was removed and adapted to the present study. The adapted 11 Likert items are below in Table 4.14 and were used in a seven-point format.

Coding	*Likert Items (agree/disagree)*
NU_1	This product would tell people that I am different
NU_2	I would purchase this product to create a more distinctive personal identity
NU_3	I would purchase this product in order to create a style that is all my own
NU_4	This product would communicate my uniqueness
NU_5	This product would help create a personal image for myself that can't be duplicated
NU_6	This product is original
NU_7	This product would develop my personal uniqueness
NU_8	This product is interesting and unusual and will assist me in establishing a distinctive image
NU_9	This product would express my individuality
NU_10	This product would be used to shape my personal image
NU_11	This product would add to me personal identity

Table 4.14: Likert Items for Need for Uniqueness

4.7.2.3 Purchase Consideration

Purchase Consideration was used as an indicator of purchase behaviour for the product presented in the experimental stimuli. Purchase Consideration was measured using a seven-

point, four-item semantic differential scale by MacKenzie, Lutz, and Belch (1986) as presented below in Table 4.15.

Coding	*Semantic-Differential Items*
PC_1	Certain/Uncertain
PC_2	Likely/Unlikely
PC_3	Probably/Improbably
PC_4	Possible/Impossible

Table 4.15: Semantic-Differential Items for Purchase Consideration

4.7.3 Demographic Measures

Seven demographic questions were included in the questionnaire to control for possible impacts on responses due to demographic variations in the sample. Numerous studies discussed the impact of demographic variables on the variables outlined in this section. Women, more so than men are more involved in fashion, more likely to engage in communicative consumption more concerned with physical appearance and portrayal of status, and creating favourable public images (Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982; Hudders, 2012; O'Cass & McEwen, 2006; Workman & Lee, 2011). Age was found to be positively associated with increased identity and status consumption, increased social comparison, and a change in the importance and nature of the self-concept (Csikszentmihalyi & Rochberg-Halton, 1981; Furby, 1978a, 1978b; Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982; Montemayor & Eisen, 1977; Wiley et al., 2007). However, this effect is noted to cease in later adulthood (Csikszentmihalyi & Rochberg-Halton, 1981) and differs from self-concept development and maintenance of childhood and adolescence (Dittmar & Pepper, 1994; Froh et al., 2011; Gil et al., 2012; Hartman et al., 2006; Miles, Cliff, & Burr, 1998). Education and income were also found to produce stronger motivation and participation for status and identity consumption due to individuals having greater means to engage in such behaviour (Belk, 1988; Chao & Schor, 1998; Dittmar, 1994). Conversely, a large number of studies suggest that luxury good consumption for identity and status concerns is not exclusive to the wealthy, but important for those of high income and modest means (Durvasula et al., 2001; Eastman et al., 1999; Gil et al., 2012; Hudders, 2012; Lertwannawit & Mandhachitara, 2012; Mandel et al., 2006; O'Cass & Frost, 2002; O'Cass & McEwen, 2006). Lastly, though some studies suggest that materialistic tendencies mentioned here are more evident in Western culture (Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982; Richins, 1994b), more recent studies reveal that

materialism occurs across multiple cultures in more or less equal levels (Durvasula et al., 2001; Ger & Belk, 1996). Consequently, demographic questions pertaining to gender, age, education, ethnicity, relationship status, employment status, and annual salary were included. The format of these questions can be found in Appendix 8.6.6.

4.7.4 Measures for Covariate Variables

4.7.4.1 Self-Consciousness

Self-Consciousness was measured using the twenty-two-item, seven-point Likert scale for Self-Consciousness developed by Fenigstein et al. (1975). This scale comprises three factors pertaining to Private and Public Self-Consciousness and Social Anxiety, these factors and their items are shown in Table 4.16.

Factor	***Coding***	***Likert-Items (agree/disagree)***
Private	PSC_1	I'm always trying to figure myself out
	PSC_2	Generally, I'm not very aware of myself *
	PSC_3	I reflect about myself a lot
	PSC_4	I'm often the subject of my own fantasies
	PSC_5	I never scrutinise myself *
	PSC_6	I'm generally attentive to my inner feelings
	PSC_7	I'm constantly examining my motives
	PSC_8	I sometimes have the feeling that I'm off somewhere else watching myself
	PSC_9	I'm alert to changes in my mood
	PSC_10	I'm aware of the way my mind works when I work through a problem
Public	PSC_11	I'm concerned about my style of doing things
	PSC_12	I'm concerned about the way I look
	PSC_13	I usually worry about making a good impression
	PSC_14	One of the last things I for before I leave my house is look in the mirror
	PSC_15	I'm concerned about what other people think of me
	PSC_16	I'm usually aware of my appearance
Social Anxiety	PSC_17	It takes me time to overcome my shyness in new situations
	PSC_18	I have trouble working when someone is watching me
	PSC_19	I get embarrassed very easily
	PSC_20	I don't find it hard to talk to strangers *
	PSC_21	I feel anxious when I speak in front of a group
	PSC_22	Large groups make me nervous

* = reverse coded items

Table 4.16: Likert Items for Self-Consciousness

4.7.4.2 Materialism

Materialism was measured using the eighteen-item, seven-point Likert scale for Materialism developed by Richins and Dawson (1992). This scale consists of three factors for Success, Centrality and Happiness, items and factors are shown in Table 4.17.

Factor	***Coding***	***Likert Items (agree/disagree)***
Success	M_1	I admire people who own expensive homes, cars, and clothes
	M_2	Some of the most important achievements in life include acquiring material possessions
	M_3	I don't place much emphasis on the amount of material objects people own as a sign of success *
	M_4	The things I own say a lot about how well I am going in life
	M_5	I like to own things that impress people
	M_6	I don't pay much attention to the material objects other people own *
Centrality	M_7	I usually buy only the things I need *
	M_8	I try to keep my life simple, as far as possessions are concerned *
	M_9	The things I own aren't all that important to me *
	M_10	I enjoy spending money on things that aren't practical
	M_11	Buying things gives me a lot of pleasure
	M_12	I like a lot of luxury in my life
	M_13	I put less emphasis on material things than most people I know *
Happiness	M_14	I have all the things I really need to enjoy life *
	M_15	My life would be better if I owned certain things I don't have
	M_16	I wouldn't be any happier if I owned nicer things *
	M_17	I'd be happier if I could afford to buy more things
	M_18	It sometimes bothers me quite a bit that I can't afford to buy all the things I'd like

* = reverse coded items

Table 4.17: Likert Items for Materialism

4.7.4.3 Social Comparison Orientation

Social Comparison Orientation was measured using the eleven-item, seven-point Likert scale adapted from Gibbons and Buunk (1999). The scale is comprised of two factors corresponding to Ability and Opinion though authors recommend all items to be used due to high correlation between factors. Scale is presented below.

Factor	*Coding*	*Likert Items (agree/disagree)*
Ability	SCO_1	I often compare how my loved ones (boy or girlfriend, family members, etc.) are doing with how others are doing
	SCO_2	I always pay attention to how I do things compared with how others do things
	SCO_3	If I want to find out how well I have done something, I compare what I have done with how others have done
	SCO_4	I often compare how I am doing socially (e.g. social skills, popularity) with other people
	SCO_5	I don't often compare myself with others *
	SCO_6	I often compare myself with others with respect to what I have accomplished in life
Opinion	SCO_7	I often like to talk with others about mutual opinions and experiences
	SCO_8	I often try to find out what others think who face similar problems as I face
	SCO_9	I always like to know what others in a similar situation would do
	SCO_10	If I want to learn more about something, I try to find out what others think about it
	SCO_11	I never consider my situation in life relative to that of others *

* = reverse coded items

Table 4.18: Likert Items for Social Comparison Orientation

4.7.4.4 Vanity Concern

Vanity-Concern was measured in addition to Vanity-View (see Section 4.7.1.2). Vanity-Concern items were taken straight from the Vanity scale developed by Netemeyer et al. (1995). The ten-item, seven-point, Likert scale is presented in Table 4.19 below.

Factor	*Coding*	*Likert Items (agree/disagree)*
Appearance-Concern	VC_1	The way I look is extremely important to me
	VC_2	I am very concerned about my appearance
	VC_3	I would feel embarrassed if I was around people and did not look my best
	VC_4	Looking my best is worth the effort
	VC_5	It is important that I always look good
Achievement-View	VC_6	Professional achievements are an obsession with me
	VC_7	I want others to look up to me because of my accomplishments
	VC_8	I am more concerned with professional success than most people I know
	VC_9	Achieving greater success than my peers is important to me
	VC_10	I want my achievements to be recognised by others

Table 4.19: Likert Items for Vanity Concern

4.8 EXPERIMENTAL PROCEDURE

4.8.1 Recruitment of Respondents

Respondents for this research were recruited from Amazon's Mechanical Turk panel of workers (see Appendix 8.6.1). As the literature revealed that females are more likely to be influenced by the variables addressed in the questionnaire (e.g. social comparison, vanity, status consumption), respondents for this research were all female. Respondents were required to confirm that they were female before being able to commence with the experiment and any respondents unable to confirm this were screened out after being thanked for their time and interest. This resulted in a North American, female sample. As this research is not addressing cultural specific constructs a North American sample was considered suitable.

For ethical and involvement considerations, a minimum age requirement of 18 years was set for this research with a maximum age of 35. It was assumed those individuals younger than 18 would not be willing or able to engage in luxury fashion consumption due to limited or no income and dependency on parents. On the other hand, individuals older than 35 were not thought to engage in the behaviour being examined, and if such behaviour was present there would be variation between the age groups and were therefore excluded from the sample (see Section 4.7.3). To control for this, respondents were required to confirm they were between the

ages of 18 and 35 in conjunction with their gender (as mentioned above), before being able to proceed with the experiment. A second age control was included at the end of the questionnaire in the demographics section (see Appendix 8.6.6).

For the final questionnaire, it was important to have a non-student sample in order to provide a sample more reflective of market characteristics. Though a student sample still complies with the age requirements for this study, it has a heavy focus on those individuals between the ages of 18 and 22. Therefore, a non-student sample was able to provide a more even spread of age groups. Moreover, students are typically price sensitive. Though the literature says that luxury good consumption is not exclusive to the wealthy, a non-student sample was able to provide a range of income and education levels. Overall, a diverse sample was important for the experiment and Mechanical Turk's panel of workers provided a range of ages, income and education levels, and ethnicities.

As an incentive, workers were offered $2.50 USD for completing the questionnaire. This payment level offered workers with the equivalent of $15 USD an hour for completing the questionnaire which was estimated to take ten minutes to compete.

Recruitment took place over a five hour period commencing at 11am and concluding at 4pm on the 13th of January 2015. During that time a total of 296 respondents were recruited.

4.8.2 Ethical Considerations

The guidelines prescribed by the University of Canterbury Human Ethics Committee were followed when conducting this research. The University of Canterbury Human Ethics Committee reviewed and approved the proposed research prior to data collection (see Appendix 8.7).

To ensure ethical practices, this research included three different information sheets for pre-study two, pre-test and final experiment. The information sheets were presented on the first pages of the electronic questionnaires upon opening the Qualtrics link. The information sheets (see Appendices 8.3.1, 8.4.1 and 8.6.2) informed participants about the aim of the studies, what participation in the studies would involve, the right of participants to withdraw, and the confidential nature of the research and storage of data collected. The full purpose of the research was not provided prior to participation, but full disclosure was provided upon completion (see Appendices 8.6.7). This was done in order to prevent risk of priming participants and any resulting impact on study results.

For the second pre-study and the pre-test, respondents were asked for their email addresses to enter the prize draw. Though this information was linked to the data collected, participants were informed that this information was to be used for the sole purpose of randomly selecting three winners for the prizes on offer and would not be used for any other purpose. For the final experiment, participants were required to provide their Mechanical Turk worker ID which was then forwarded to a member of the Mechanical Turk team to process payment of incentives.

Finally, informed consent was obtained from participants at the start of the survey once they had read the information sheet provided (see Appendix 8.6.2). This was done by asking participants to confirm that they had read the information provided in the Information Sheet, that they agreed to participate in the study, consented to publication of results, and that they understood their rights to withdraw from the survey at any time prior to completion. Participants were prompted to select 'yes, I confirm the above statements and would like to take part in this survey', or 'no, thanks'. Respondents that selected the later were thanked for their interest and directed to the end of the survey without being able to proceed with the questionnaire.

4.9 ONLINE EXPERIEMENT

This research was carried out as an online experiment using Qualtrics (Qualtrics, 2014), distributed using Amazon's Mechanical Turk. Research has shown that Mechanical Turk is a cost and time effective way of collecting data for research (Buhrmester, Kwang, & Gosling, 2011; Paolacci, Chandler, & Ipeirotis, 2010). Mechanical Turk's pool of workers is predominantly female, aged 18 to 81 with a mean age of 36 years (Paolacci et al., 2010, p. 412). Moreover, workers are found to be diverse in culture and income (Buhrmester et al., 2011; Horton, Rand, & Zeckhauser, 2010; Paolacci et al., 2010), providing a suitable sample for the experiment. Utilising the Mechanical Turk service also allows for control for multiple responses and withholding payment for participants who do not fit the demographic criteria or who fail attention checks. Mechanical Turk samples have also been found to have increased internal validity due to the lack of interaction between participants and the experimenters (Horton et al., 2010; Paolacci et al., 2010). Using Mechanical Turk, a sample outside of New Zealand that was reflective of the population was able to be collected easily within a short amount of time and at a relatively low cost (Paolacci et al., 2010).

The experimental procedure is presented below and more detail is available in Appendices 8.6. Questions were presented one per page to eliminate the need for scrolling or overwhelming respondents with multiple questions at a time. However, the questionnaire can be divided up into six sections based on the type of content and questions included.

4.9.1 Section One – Information and Consent (Appendix 8.6.2)

The first section included the information sheet discussed in Section 4.8.2. Participants were presented with the information sheet and then asked to consent to participation in the survey. Respondents who ticked yes were then asked to confirm that they were a female aged 18 to 35 before progressing to the next section of the survey. Respondents who ticked no to either of these questions were thanked for their time and then forwarded to the end of the questionnaire.

4.9.2 Section Two – Stimuli Exposure (Appendix 8.6.3)

In the second section, participants were informed that they were about to see an advertisement for Goyne sunglasses, which is a new up and coming, high fashion label. Participants were instructed to take their time to consider the advertisement before continuing to the next section. Participants were then randomly allocated to one of the six different experimental conditions and were therefore only exposed to one of six possible advertisements.

4.9.3 Section Three – Self-Consciousness, Independent and Dependent Measures (Appendix 8.6.4)

The third section starts with the measure for Self-Consciousness. Concealed within this first question is an attention check within the scale items which asks participants ‘if you are reading this please select strongly agree’. After that, respondents are again presented with the same advertisement they saw in the previous section to assist in recall. Next, respondents are asked to consider different parts of the advertisements (model, tagline, and product) and ask related questions corresponding to the independent variable measures. Lastly, respondents are asked to indicate likelihood of purchase for dependent variable measure.

4.9.4 Section Four – Additional Covariate Measures (Appendix 8.6.5)

This section is comprised of three questions, one for each of the additional covariates being measured. As in the previous section, a second, identical attention check is concealed within the first question pertaining to the materialism scale.

4.9.5 Section Five – Demographics (Appendix 8.6.6)

The fifth section starts by thanking respondents for their participation before asking them to answer questions about themselves. The seven demographic questions include a question for both gender and age. This acted as a second control for the demographic requirements for the study and was later used to withhold payment and remove respondents who do not meet the criteria outlines in Section 4.8.1. Lastly, the respondents are asked to provide their worker Mechanical Turk worker ID.

4.9.6 Section Six – Finish and Debrief (Appendix 8.6.7)

The final section again thanked participants for their time and effort. It is explained to respondents that due to the nature of the research the full purpose of the study could not be revealed prior to completion due to risk of priming participants. The full aim of the study was then disclosed before responses were submitted and the questionnaire ended.

4.10 PRE-TESTING PROCEDURE

Pre-testing was carried out prior to main data collection. Pre-testing was done to test the effectiveness of the manipulations and to assess the reliability and validity of scales used. Pre-testing also allowed the online questionnaire to be tested to ensure that it was fully operational and recorded all information required. The pre-testing procedure consisted of a single pre-test which showed that manipulations were working in the way intended and to assist in the reduction of sale items for final questionnaire.

4.10.1 Pre-Testing Sample

Respondents were recruited via email from undergraduate classes at the University of Canterbury. A pulsing strategy was used where 16 classes were emailed initially, followed by

four more classes to generate enough respondents. This resulted in a total of 3,620 undergraduate students being exposed to the invitation to participate (see Appendix 8.4.2). Only women aged 18 to 35 were asked to participate, and the opportunity to win one of three $100 Westfield vouchers was provided as incentive for participation. Of the 3,620 contacted, 141 responded equating to a response rate of 3.90%. Out of the 141 responses, 97 were deemed suitable for analysis after incomplete and unusable responses were deleted.

4.10.2 Pre-Test Results

4.10.2.1 Scale Reliability and Validity

Principle Component Analysis (with Varimax rotation) and Cronbach's alpha procedures were used to test the unidimensionality and reliability of all scales. This analysis was carried out to reduce the number of scale items used in the final questionnaire so that participant completion time could be reduced. Items that had communality scores less than .5 were removed as well as items that loaded onto multiple factors, and analyses run again. Removed items and the results of the analyses are presented in Tables Table 4.20 and Table 4.21.

Scale Item		***Communality Score***	***Factor Loading***
Vanity-View			
VV_8	This product would make my achievements highly regarded by others		.55, .68
VV_11	This product would make others wish they were as successful as me		.56, .65
Self-Esteem			
SE_4	I feel confident that I understand things		.67, .50
SE_19	I am worried about looking foolish	.45	
Motive Satisfaction			
CC_9	This product indicates my wealth		.58, .53
SV_1	This product would help me to feel accepted		.54, .54
SV_4	This product would give its owner social approval		.60, .58
Social Comparison Orientation			
SCO_1	I often compare how my loved ones (boy of girlfriend, family members etc.) are doing with how others are doing	.42	
Vanity Concern			
VC_7	I want others to look up to me because of my accomplishments	.47	
VC_10	I want my achievements to be recognised by others	.38	
Self-Consciousness			
PSC_8	I sometimes have the feeling that I'm off somewhere else watching myself	.35	
PSC_20	I don't find it had to talk to strangers	.47	

Table 4.20: Removed Scale Items

Scale	*Variance Explained*	*Cronbach's Alpha*	*Number of Items*
Social Comparison	71.0%	.88	11
Vanity-View	85.7%	.96	9
State Self-Esteem	68.2%	.91	17
Motive Satisfaction	71.5%	.97	27
Purchase Consideration	75.0%	.89	4
Materialism	66.2%	.86	18
Social Comparison Orientation	66.1%	.79	10
Vanity-Concern	75.2%	.89	8
Self-Consciousness	67.3%	.80	20

Table 4.21: Scale Variance and Validity

4.10.2.2 Manipulation Checks

To test the effectiveness of the two different manipulations, two scales presented in Table 4.9 and Table 4.10 were used (Social Comparison and Vanity-View). A one-way ANOVA and a one sample t test were conducted. Using the total scale mean for the Social Comparison scale and Vanity-View factors, the t test and ANOVA were used to determine whether there were significant differences between the three Social Comparison levels and two Vanity appeals at the .05 level. Table 4.22 and Table 4.23 summarise this analysis.

Descriptives			
Condition		***Mean***	***Standard Deviation***
Upward		4.86	.79
Lateral		4.35	.70
Downward		3.89	.78
Homogeneity of Variances			
Levene Statistic	.009	***Significance***	.99
ANOVA (Between Groups)			
F-Value	13.77	***Significance***	.00
Multiple Comparisons			
Comparison		***Mean Difference***	***Significance***
Upward-Lateral		.51	.03
Upward-Downward		.97	.00
Lateral-Downward		.46	.05

Table 4.22: Results for Social Comparison

The results show that there is a significant difference ($p < .05$) between the three Social Comparison conditions. Each social comparison condition was found to be significantly distinct from the other two conditions with equal variance in each condition. This confirms that the Social Comparison manipulations were successful.

Sample Statistics			**T Test (test value = 4)**		
Vanity Condition	***Mean***	***Standard Deviation***	***t***	***Mean Difference***	***Significance***
Appearance					
Appearance factor	3.43	1.71	-2.29	-.58	.03
Achievement factor	3.11	1.37	-4.42	-.89	.00
Achievement					
Appearance factor	3.19	1.22	-4.75	-.81	.00
Achievement factor	3.46	1.58	-2.43	-.54	.02

Table 4.23: Results for Vanity

A one sample t test comparing the factor means for each Vanity condition with the neutral point (test value = 4) was conducted. The results show that Appearance and Achievement factor means were all significantly different to the neutral point at the .05 level. In-keeping with the results from pre-study one, the factor mean scores showed the largest, negative differences for their opposed condition (i.e. the Achievement [Appearance] factor produced the largest, negative mean for the Appearance [Achievement] condition). These mean differences have increased from pre-study two showing that when paired with images, the taglines produce stronger results. Also in-keeping with pre-study two, factors paired with their corresponding conditions still produce negative mean differences (i.e. the Achievement [Appearance] factor produced negative mean differences for Achievement [Appearance] condition) from the neutral point. These mean differences have also increased from the second pre-study, although by a smaller degree. However, the sample for the pre-test was smaller than pre-study two with less than 20 participants for each of the six conditions. As the sample for the final questionnaire will be substantially larger, and because no changes can be made to advertisements without compromising likeness to actual print advertisements, the final questionnaire will be conducted without amendments or a second pre-test.

4.11 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter aimed to provide an overview of the quantitative research methodology adopted to test the hypotheses discussed in Chapter Three. This chapter first explained the research and experimental design adopted. The stimuli development was then discussed including the justification for choosing sunglasses and the Goyne brand for use in the print advertisements. Once levels and manipulations for independent variables were presented both pre-studies were outlined in conjunction with a presentation of findings and implications for stimuli and final questionnaire. Next, the development of the final questionnaire is explained including presentation of variables and justification of measures. Experimental procedure for respondent recruitment and ethical considerations is provided before the online experiment is outlined. Finally, the pre-testing procedure is explained and results presented. The pre-test confirmed that Social Comparison was successfully manipulated and that Vanity manipulations are working enough to proceed to the final data collection. The next chapter provides an overview of the results and analyses of the final experiment.

5 RESULTS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter aims to present an overview of the statistical analyses that were carried out to test the hypotheses presented in Chapter Three. First, an overview of the research sample is provided including size and composition. Next, the scales used are examined and the dimensionality and reliability are assessed. Manipulation checks determining the effectiveness of the experimental manipulations for social comparison and vanity are then presented. Next, the effects of the independent variable are determined. Finally, hypotheses and relationships were tested using PLS procedure before effects of covariates are outlined.

5.2 SAMPLE SIZE AND COMPOSITION

5.2.1 Sample Size

As mentioned in Section 4.8.1, data collection for the final experiment took place on the 13th of January 2015 over a period of five hours. During this time, a total of 297 respondents were recruited via Amazon's Mechanical Turk.

Of the 297 respondents, two responses were tests conducted by Mechanical Turk personnel before granting workers access to the survey. Two respondents could not verify that they were female aged 18 to 35 in Section One of the experiment; five respondents indicated that they were male; and two respondents indicated that they were outside of the 18 to 35 year age bracket in Section Five. Moreover, nine respondents withdrew from the study for unknown reasons, leaving 276 complete responses. Four of the withdrawals occurred at the point in the study where respondents were required to confirm that they met the age and gender requirements for the study. Two respondents withdrew in Section Two of the study, with the other three respondents withdrawing at various stages in Section Three.

Respondents were presented with two attention checks in Section Three and Section Four of the study. Six responses were deleted due to respondents failing both attention checks. This resulted in a total of 270 responses. However, the manipulated conditions require equal sample sizes. Therefore, 30 responses were randomly deleted, which resulted in a final sample size of 240 (40 responses for each experimental condition).

5.2.2 Sample Composition

Table 5.1 presents the distribution of socio-demographic characteristics in the sample. The results show that age of participants within the 18 to 35 bracket was relatively even with 35.8% for each of the middle and upper age groups (26 to 35) and 28.3% for participants younger than 25. Over half of the sample had at least completed a two year college degree with only 12.5% having only completed high school. No one in the sample indicated that they had completed less than high school or a doctoral degree. Ethnicity distribution was largely uneven with the vast majority being Caucasian (72.5%). All other ethnic groups were substantially smaller, with no one in the Pacific Islander group. Just over half respondents (62.1%) were in a relationship of some kind, with 37.9% being single, divorced or widowed. The majority of respondents were working as either employees or self-employed. Only 8.8% of respondents were students which is a substantial difference to the pre-test sample, indicating that the final sample had a wider variety of participants. No one in the sample worked for the government, was in unpaid employment (i.e. volunteer or internship), or unsurprisingly, retired. Furthermore, only one respondent indicated that they were in the $125,001 to $150,000 income bracket, with no one indicating that they has a salary of $150,001 or higher. A large proportion of the sample was in the lowest income bracket of less than $25,000. However the $25,001 to $50,000 income bracket was of similar size at 36.3% (compared to 41.3%).

Demographic Variable	*Category*	*Percentage*
Age	18 to 25	28.3%
	26 to 30	35.8%
	31 to 35	35.8%
Education	High School	12.5%
	Some College	25.8%
	2-Year College Degree	13.3%
	4-Year College Degree	40.8%
	Master's Degree	7.1%
	Professional Degree	.4%
Ethnicity	White/Caucasian	72.5%
	African American	12.1%
	Hispanic	3.8%
	Asian	9.2%
	Native American	.4%
	Other	2.1%
Relationship Status	Single, never married	34.6%
	Married (or de factor relationship)	45.4%
	Divorced/Separated	2.9%
	In a relationship (not living together)	16.7%
	Widowed	.4%
Employment Status	Employed (Paid)	58.8%
	Self-Employed	19.2%
	Unemployed	5.4%
	Student	8.8%
	Homemaker	7.9%
Salary (USD)	$0 - $25,000	41.3%
	25,001 - $50,000	36.3%
	$50,001 - $75,000	15.0%
	$75,001 - $100,000	5.8%
	$100,001 - $125,000	1.3%
	$125,001 - $150,000	.4%

Table 5.1: Demographic Sample Composition

5.3 SCALE STRUCTURE AND RELIABILITY

The structure and reliability of the scales were tested using Principle Component Analysis and the Cronbach's alpha procedure (Cronbach, 1951). The results of these analyses are reported as well as the descriptives for each of the scales.

5.3.1 Scale Structure

Principle Component Analysis with Varimax rotation was used to test the dimensionality of the scales used in the experiment. Items with a communality scores less than .5 were deleted. Coefficients less than .3 were suppressed and items deemed as equally loading onto two or more factors were considered to be cross-loading.

5.3.1.1 Social Comparison

As a result of the analysis, one item was deleted for having a low communality score (SC_7). Subsequent analysis indicated that items loaded onto two factors different to those from the original scale. However, three items were deleted due to cross-loading onto both factors (SC_1, SC_5, and SC_9). The remaining seven-item scale loaded onto two factors corresponding to Group Fit/Attractiveness (SC_6, SC_8, SC_10, and SC_11) and Rank (SC_2, SC_3, and SC_4). Both factors explained 73.5% of the variance in total.

5.3.1.2 Vanity-View

Unsurprisingly, analysis revealed that items loaded onto two factors corresponding to the Appearance (VV_1, VV_2, VV_3, VV_4, VV_5, and VV_6) and Achievement (VV_7, VV_9, and VV_10) sub-scales. The nine-item scale explained 81.6% of the variance.

5.3.1.3 Self Esteem

Principle Component Analysis resulted in one item being deleted for low communality (SE_2). A further seven items were deleted for cross-loading (SE_1, SE_6, SE_8, SE_9, SE_11, SE_14 and SE_16). This resulted in the remaining nine items loading onto three factors from the original scale, corresponding to Appearance (SE_13, SE_15, SE_17 and SE_18), Social (SE_7, SE_10, and SE_12), and Performance (SE_3, and SE_5). All items had high factor loadings (> .8) and the scale explained 79.0% of the variance.

5.3.1.4 Motive Satisfaction

Each scale was analysed separately. The analysis resulted in one item being deleted for low communality (CC_11). Three items were deleted for cross loading (CC_1, CC_2, and CC_8). Remaining items all loaded onto a single factor for each scale. The remaining eight items for Conspicuous Consumption explained 74.5% of the variance, the four-item Social Value scale explained 77.5% of the variance, and the eleven-item scale for Need for Uniqueness explained 78.3% of the variance.

5.3.1.5 Purchase Consideration

The Principle Component Analysis revealed that all items loaded onto a single factor. The four-item scale explained 84.9% of the variance.

5.3.1.6 Materialism

Analysis resulted in three items being deleted for low communality (M_7, M_9 and M_13). A further ten items were deleted for cross-loading (M_1, M_2, M_3, M_4, M_5, M_6, M_8, M_15, M_17 and M_18). The remaining items loaded onto two factors correspond to Centrality (M_10, M_11 and M_12) and Happiness (M_14, and M_16). The five-item scale explained 72.9% of the variance.

5.3.1.7 Social Comparison Orientation

The Principle Component Analysis resulted in one item being deleted for low communality (SCO_11). The remaining items loaded onto two factors identified in the original scale development corresponding to Ability (SCO_2, SCO_3, SCO_4, SCO_5, and SCO_6) and Opinion (SCO_7, SCO_8, SCO_9, and SCO_10). The nine-item scale explained 69.6% of the variance.

5.3.1.8 Vanity-Concern

The Principle Component Analysis showed items loaded onto two factors corresponding to Appearance (VC_1, VC_2, VC_3, VC_4 and VC_5) and Achievement (VC_6, VC_8, and VC_9) matching factors of original scale. The eight-item scale explained 78.0% of the variance.

5.3.1.9 Self-Consciousness

Principle Component Analysis resulted in six items being deleted for low communality (PSC_4, PSC_5, PSC_6, PSC_9, PSC_14, and PSC_16). A further three items were deleted for cross-loading (PSC_2, PSC_10, and PSC_15). The remaining eleven items loaded onto three factors corresponding to Social Anxiety (PSC_17, PSC_18, PSC_19, PSC_21, and PSC_22), Public Self-Consciousness (PSC_11, PSC_12 and PSC_13) and Private Self-Consciousness PSC_1, PSC_3, and PSC_7). The scale explained 69.3% of the variance.

5.3.2 Scale Reliability

After Principle Component Analysis was completed, all scales were tested for internal consistency (reliability) using Cronbach's alpha procedure. The results of this analysis suggested that a number of items be removed to improve reliability. Scales of concern were Social Comparison, Purchase Consideration and Vanity-Concern. Consequently, items SC_6, SC_8, PC_1, PC_4 and VC_9 were removed. The compositions of other scales were not altered. Results are presented in Table 5.2 and show that all scales had an acceptable level of reliability (> .7). The only exception is the Happiness factor for Materialism with an alpha of only .62. Caution was therefore exercised when interpreting analysis related to this variable.

Scale	***Cronbach's Alpha***
Social Comparison	
Attractiveness	.91
Rank	.82
Vanity-View	
Appearance	.94
Achievement	.94
State Self-Esteem	
Appearance	.92
Social	.83
Performance	.72
Motive Satisfaction	
Conspicuous Consumption	.93
Social Value	.90
Need for Uniqueness	.97
Purchase Consideration	.97
Materialism	
Centrality	.81
Happiness	.62
Social Comparison Orientation	
Ability	.89
Opinion	.85
Vanity-Concern	
Appearance	.93
Achievement	.87
Self-Consciousness	
Private	.73
Public	.75
Social Anxiety	.91

Table 5.2: Cronbach Alpha Reliability Coefficients for Total Scale Variables

5.3.3 Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics were calculated for each scale and are presented in Table 5.3. The table shows the mean, standard deviation, skewness and kurtosis for each measure. Of the 20 factors, four were not found to be normally distributed. Appearance (Self-Esteem), Purchase Consideration, Opinion (Social Comparison Orientation) and Achievement (Vanity) all showed substantial negative kurtosis, indicating that these scales have a relatively flat distribution.

Histograms for all of the measures are provided in Appendix 8.8 and a correlation matrix for the scales used in this study is provided in Table 5.4.

Scale	***Mean***	***Std Dev***	***Skewness***	***Kurtosis***
Social Comparison	4.79	1.11	-.13	-.01
Attractiveness	5.14	1.48	-.58	-.22
Rank	4.55	1.14	.15	-.00
Vanity-View	4.69	1.03	-.14	.08
Appearance	4.56	1.48	-.47	-.70
Achievement	4.97	1.51	-.68	-.31
State Self-Esteem	4.28	1.24	.03	-.76
Appearance	4.22	1.71	-.23	-1.10
Social	3.65	1.51	.52	-.58
Performance	5.37	1.26	-.70	-.38
Motive Satisfaction	3.70	1.18	-.12	-.54
Conspicuous Consumption	2.96	.93	-.11	-.62
Social Value	4.99	1.29	-.86	.42
Need for Uniqueness	3.77	1.53	.04	-.82
Purchase Consideration	3.86	1.94	.05	-1.25
Materialism	3.97	1.20	-.11	-.35
Centrality	4.05	1.44	-.09	-.75
Happiness	3.85	1.47	.07	-.62
Social Comparison Orientation	4.85	1.10	-.69	.52
Ability	4.67	1.33	-.66	-.15
Opinion	5.08	1.11	-.92	1.23
Vanity-Concern	4.61	1.21	-.34	-.29
Appearance	4.98	1.30	-.57	-.07
Achievement	3.68	1.69	.03	-1.12
Self-Consciousness	4.86	1.01	-.45	-.16
Private	4.85	1.89	-.49	-.13
Public	5.14	1.17	-.73	.29
Social Anxiety	4.69	1.61	.62	-.42

Table 5.3: Descriptive Statistics for Total Scale Variables

	SC_A	SC_R	VV_Ap	VV_Ac	SE_A	SE_S	SE_P	PC	M_C	M_H	SCO_A	SCO_O	VC_Ap	VC_Ac	PSC_Pr	PSC_Pu	PSC_A	CC	SV	NU
SC Attractiveness		.529**	.185**	.069	-.391**	-.276**	-.254**	.064	-.030	.112	.099	.009	-.038	-.047	.041	-.028	.267**	.131*	.191**	.080
SC Rank			.116	.149*	-.197**	-.240**	-.284**	.220**	.037	.107	.144*	.026	.110	.018	.089	.058	.217**	.278**	.182**	.268**
VV Appearance				-.174**	.067	-.106	-.020	.201**	.208**	.108	.157*	.237**	.165*	.245**	.205**	.061	-.047	.262**	.339**	.294**
VV Achievement					.006	-.122	.041	.256**	.167**	.028	.219**	.133*	.280**	.232**	.124	.183**	-.015	.436**	.286**	.331**
SE Appearance						.474**	.424**	.138*	-.130*	-.280**	-.314**	-.093	-.017	.124	-.117	-.102	-.505**	-.009	-.087	.001
SE Social							.336**	-.110	-.327**	-.333**	-.590**	-.296**	-.367**	-.110	-.231**	.521**	-.531**	-.302**	-.339**	-.212**
SE Performance								.091	-.061	-.136*	-.138*	.064	.048	.012	-.040	-.009	-.369**	-.048	.049	-.041
PC									.292**	.056	.213**	.202**	.406**	.343**	.065	.178**	-.147*	.629**	.542**	.678**
M Centrality										.356**	.441**	.309**	.543**	.418**	.189**	.443**	.076	.442**	.370**	.360**
M Happiness											.330**	.112	.236**	.152*	.125	.190**	.103	.198**	.222**	.138*
SCO Ability												.573**	.442**	.267**	.277**	.498**	.251**	.423**	.454**	.331**
SCO Opinion													.279**	.196**	.297**	.324**	.077	.257**	.395**	.259**
VC Appearance														.403**	.232**	.586**	.040	.476**	.444**	.423**
VC Achievement															.063	.200	-.208**	.392**	.211**	.293**
PSC Private																.321**	.185**	.150*	.182**	.089
PSC Public																	.252**	.309**	.356**	.195**
PSC Social Anxiety																		-.025	.025	-.072
MS Conspicuous Consumption																			.765**	.783**
MS Social Value																				.696**
MS Need for Uniqueness																				

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed) , * Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-teiled)

Table 5.4: Correlation Matrix for Total Scale Variables (r values)

5.4 MANIPULATION CHECKS

In-keeping with the manipulation checks in Chapter Four, the measures for Social Comparison and Vanity-View were used as manipulation checks for the final experiment. Comparisons of mean scores and standard deviation are made between the pre-test and main study for items in these two scales and are presented in Tables Table 5.5 and Table 5.6. The Cronbach's alpha for each factor is also included.

Results show that the mean scores for each item and factor increased for the final experiment. As the experimental stimuli were the same for both the pre-test and the main experiment, it is assumed that the variance can be explained by the differences in the samples. Differences include the significantly larger sample size for the final experiment and that the pre-test sample was all students.

		Pre-Test		Final Experiment	
Scale Item		***Mean***	***Std Dev***	***Mean***	***Std Dev***
Social Comparison (Rank)					
SC_1	Inferior/Superior *	4.38	1.12		
SC_2	Less Competent/More Competent	4.26	1.05	4.42	1.33
SC_6	Less Talented/More Talented	4.24	1.16	4.65	1.32
SC_7	Weaker/Stronger	4.20	1.21	4.57	1.33
SC_8	Less Confident/More Confident *	5.35	1.27		
Total Factor		4.48	.90	4.55	1.14
Cronbach's Alpha			.83		.82
*Social Comparison (Group Fit)**					
SC_4	Less Accepted/More Accepted	4.52	1.26		
SC_5	Different/Same	2.72	1.34		
SC_11	Outsider/Insider	4.46	1.17		
Total Factor		3.90	.88		
Cronbach's Alpha			.486		
Social Comparison (Attractiveness)					
SC_3	Less Likeable/More Likeable *	4.24	1.20		
SC_9	Less Desirable/More Desirable	4.82	1.48	5.15	1.50
SC_10	Less Attractive/More Attractive	4.88	1.52	5.14	1.59
Total Factor		4.65	1.24	5.14	1.48
Cronbach's Alpha			.86		.91

* Item/factor was removed prior to descriptives being run for final experiment

Table 5.5: Social Comparison Factor Mean Scores

		Pre-Test		Final Experiment	
Scale Item		***Mean***	***Std Dev***	***Mean***	***Std Dev***
Vanity View (Appearance)					
VV_1	The product would make people notice how attractive I am	3.54	1.72	4.83	1.62
VV_2	The product would make my looks very appealing to others	3.60	1.58	5.03	1.52
VV_3	The product would make people envious of my good looks	3.19	1.53	4.55	1.67
VV_4	The product wold who that I am a very good looking individual	3.32	1.59	4.72	1.67
VV_5	The product would show that my body is sexually appealing	3.12	1.64	4.11	1.86
VV_6	The product will show that I have the type of body people want to look at	3.04	1.53	4.10	1.77
Total Factor		3.30	1.47	4.56	1.48
Cronbach's Alpha			.96		.94
Vanity View (Achievement)					
VV_7	The product would show that in a professional sense, I am a very successful person	3.28	1.55	4.91	1.62
VV_9	The product would show that I am an accomplished person	3.32	1.57	5.10	1.54
VV_10	The product would show that I am a good example of professional success	3.29	1.64	4.89	1.64
Total Factor		3.30	1.48	4.97	1.51
Cronbach's Alpha			.93		.94

Table 5.6: Vanity-View Factor Mean Scores

To determine the effectiveness of the experimental manipulations, a one-way ANOVA and an independent samples t-test were conducted. Using the total factor means for each manipulation, the ANOVA and t-test were used to determine whether there were significant

differences ($p < .05$) between the levels of each experimental condition. The means and mean plots for the different manipulations are presented in Appendix 8.9.

For the Social Comparison, both factors were included in the analysis. For Attractiveness the ANOVA revealed that there were some significant differences ($F = 12.06$, $p < .01$) between the Upward ($\overline{x} = 5.78$), Lateral ($\overline{x} = 4.81$), and Downward ($\overline{x} = 4.84$) conditions. The Tukey HSD Post-Hoc test showed that there was no significant difference ($p = .053$) in variance between groups. The mean difference between Upward and Lateral was .963 which was statistically significant ($p < .01$). The mean difference between Lateral and Downward was -.025 which was not statistically significant ($p = .993$). The mean difference between Downward and Upward was .938 which was statistically significant ($p < .01$). For Rank the ANOVA revealed that there was no significant difference ($F = .577$, $p = .562$) between the Upward ($\overline{x} = 4.48$), Lateral ($\overline{x} = 4.50$), and Downward ($\overline{x} = 4.66$) conditions. The Tukey HSD Post-Hoc test revealed that there was no significant difference ($p = .619$) in variance between groups. The mean difference between Upward and Lateral was -.017 which was not statistically significant ($p = .995$). The mean difference between Lateral and Downward was -.158 which was not significantly different ($p = .653$). The difference between downward and upward was .175 which was not statistically significant ($p = .595$).

For the Vanity manipulations, both Appearance and Achievement factors were included in the analysis. For Appearance the t-test revealed that there was a significant difference ($F = 26.92$, $p < .01$) between the variances for the Appearance and Achievement conditions. The mean difference between the Appearance ($\overline{x} = 5.33$) and Achievement ($\overline{x} = 3.79$) conditions was -1.54 which was statistically significant ($t = -9.40$, $p < .01$). For Achievement the t-test revealed that there was a significant difference ($F = 17.14$, $p < .01$) between the variances of each condition. The mean difference between the Appearance ($\overline{x} = 4.12$) and Achievement ($\overline{x} = 5.82$) conditions was 1.70 which was statistically significant ($t = 10.55$, $p < .01$).

The final stage in the manipulation check procedure involved checking the effect of socio-demographic variables, as well as the covariates, on Social Comparison and Vanity. Consequently, eight ANCOVAs were conducted which included a separate analysis for each factor for each measure. The grouping variables for Social Comparison and Vanity were entered as fixed factors, the socio-demographic variables and covariates were entered as the covariate variables, and the factors for both Social Comparison and Vanity-View measures

were entered as respective dependent variables. Results of these analyses can be viewed in Table 5.7 and Table 5.8.

	Social Comparison						Vanity					
	Attractiveness			Rank			Appearance			Achievement		
Variable	***F***	***Sig***	η_p^2	***F***	***Sig***	η_p^2	***F***	***Sig***	η_p^2	***F***	***Sig***	η_p^2
Age	.00	1.00	.00	.33	.57	.00	.09	.76	.00	.11	.74	.00
Education	5.31	.02	.02	.29	.59	.00	.52	.47	.00	.98	.32	.00
Ethnicity	5.01	.03	.02	1.31	.25	.01	.00	.99	.00	2.35	.13	.01
Relationship Status	2.08	.15	.01	1.49	.22	.01	.03	.86	.00	.05	.82	.00
Employment Status	3.07	.08	.01	.42	.52	.00	.00	1.00	.00	.02	.89	.00
Salary	9.27	.01	.04	.47	.49	.00	5.88	.02	.03	.21	.65	.00

Table 5.7: Effects of the Socio-Demographic Variables on Social Comparison and Vanity-View

	Social Comparison						Vanity					
	Attractiveness			Rank			Appearance			Achievement		
Variable	***F***	***Sig***	η_p^2	***F***	***Sig***	η_p^2	***F***	***Sig***	η_p^2	***F***	***Sig***	η_p^2
Centrality	1.92	.17	.01	.69	.41	.00	1.45	.230	.01	.10	.75	.00
Happiness	2.45	.12	.01	.66	.42	.00	.19	.67	.00	1.20	.28	.01
Ability	1.32	.25	.01	1.48	.23	.01	.01	.91	.00	1.87	.17	.01
Opinion	.05	.83	.00	.61	.44	.00	3.75	.05	.02	.15	.70	.00
Appearance	.10	.76	.00	2.39	.12	.01	1.10	.30	.01	5.36	.02	.02
Achievement	.26	.61	.00	.19	.66	.00	12.24	.00	.05	2.44	.12	.01
Private	.04	.84	.00	.50	.48	.00	5.06	.03	.02	3.36	.07	.01
Public	2.62	.11	.01	1.71	.19	.01	1.82	.18	.01	.43	.51	.00
Social Anxiety	16.29	.00	.07	9.14	.00	.04	.57	.45	.00	.04	.84	.00

Table 5.8: Effects of the Covariate Variables on Social Comparison and Vanity

With respect to Social Comparison, Attractiveness and Rank were analysed separately. For Attractiveness, it was found that education ($F = 5.31$, $p < .05$), ethnicity ($F = 5.01$, $p > .05$) and salary ($F = 9.27$, $p < .05$) were found to have a significant influence. However, these effects were small ($\eta_p^2 = .02$, .02 and .04 respectively). In contrast, no socio-demographic variables were found to have a significant effect on Rank. Social Anxiety was found to have a significant

effect on both Attractiveness ($F = 16.29$, $p < .01$, $\eta_p^2 = .07$) and Rank ($F = 9.14$, $p < .01$, $\eta_p^2 = .04$), though this effect was larger for Attractiveness.

With respect to Vanity, Appearance and Achievement were analysed separately. For Appearance, it was found that salary had a significant influence ($F = 5.88$, $p < .05$). The partial Eta-squared revealed that the effect was small ($\eta_p^2 = .03$). No socio-demographic variables were found to have a significant effect for achievement. Interestingly, Achievement-Concern and Private Self-Consciousness were found to have significant effects on Appearance-View ($F = 12.24$, $p < .01$, $\eta_p^2 = .05$; and $F = 5.06$, $p < .05$, $\eta_p^2 = .02$, respectively). Conversely, Appearance-Concern had a significant effect on Achievement-View ($F = 5.36$, $p < .51$, $\eta_p^2 = .02$).

5.5 RELATIONSHIPS OF INDEPENDENT AND DEPENDENT VARIABLES

To test the hypothesised relationships between Social Comparison and Vanity and the dependent variables, several multiple regression analyses were undertaken. Additionally, several between subjects factorial analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) were conducted to provide further insight. The factors for all four covariate variables (Self-Consciousness, Materialism, Social Comparison Orientation and Vanity-Concern) were included in each ANCOVA.

5.5.1 Relationship between Social Comparison and Self-Esteem

As proposed in Chapter Three, Hypothesis One suggests that Social Comparison will have a negative relationship with Self-Esteem. First, multiple regression was undertaken in which the perception measure for Social Comparison and its factors were entered as the independent variable. Self-Esteem and its factors were entered as the dependent variable. Second, to further examine the effects of Social Comparison on Self-Esteem, a 3x2 between subjects factorial ANCOVA was performed with Vanity included to control for any effects. The results of the regression analysis are presented in Table 5.9.

		Self-Esteem		Appearance		Social		Performance	
		β	***Sig***	***β***	***Sig***	***β***	***Sig***	***β***	***Sig***
Social Comparison		-.39	.00	-.33	.00	-.29	.00	-.31	.00
Overall	R^2	.15		.11		.09		.10	
	F	42.29	.00	28.65	.00	22.40	.00	25.02	.00

Table 5.9: Results of Regression Analysis for Self-Esteem

The results of the R^2 value indicates that perceived Social Comparison measures explained a significant amount of variation ($R^2 = .15$, $p < .01$) in Self-Esteem. Results for individual factors were relatively consistent with the amalgamated Self-Esteem measure. Overall, results of the regression indicate that perception of Social Comparison had a negative effect on Self-Esteem and that this was consistent for all three factors of Self-Esteem. Therefore, *there is evidence to support Hypothesis One*.

In addition to the amalgamated perceived measure for Social Comparison, the two distinct factors for Social Comparison were also examined. The results of the analysis for the two factors of Social Outcome are presented in Table 5.10.

		Initial Model							
		Self-Esteem		Appearance		Social		Performance	
		β	***Sig***	***β***	***Sig***	***β***	***Sig***	***β***	***Sig***
Attractiveness		-.36	.00	-.40	.00	-.21	.01	-.14	.05
Rank		-.09	.19	.01	.85	-.13	.08	-.21	.01
Overall	R^2	.17		.15		.09		.10	
	F	24.61	.00	21.35	.00	11.50	.00	12.51	.00

Table 5.10: Results of Regression Analysis for Self-Esteem

Analysis of the effects of the two factors of Social Comparison revealed varying results: R^2 increased for combined Self-Esteem ($R^2 = .17$, $p > .01$) and Appearance ($R^2 = .15$, $p > .01$). Results for the combined Self-Esteem, Appearance and Social factors were consistent in that only the Attractiveness factor of Social Comparison indicated a significant relationship ($\beta = -.36$, $p < .01$; $\beta = -.40$, $p < .01$; and $\beta = -.21$, $p < .01$, respectively). However, Attractiveness was not significant for the Performance factor ($\beta = -.14$, $p = .05$). Consequently, non-significant

factors were removed from their corresponding models and the analyses were run again (see Table 5.11).

Moreover, the descriptives and results for the ANCOVA are presented first in Tables Table 5.12 and Table 5.13 which are used to further examine the effects of Social Comparison on Self-Esteem and its factors as well as determine any effects of covariates.

		Revised Model							
		Self-Esteem		**Appearance**		**Social**		**Performance**	
		β	***Sig***	***β***	***Sig***	***β***	***Sig***	***β***	***Sig***
Attractiveness		-.41	.00	-.39	.00	-.28	.00		
Rank								-.28	.00
Overall	R^2	.17		.15		.08		.08	
	F	47.36	.00	42.84	.00	19.64	.00	20.88	.00

Table 5.11: Results of Revised Regression Model for Self-Esteem

	Self-Esteem		**Appearance**		**Social**		**Performance**	
Social Comparison	***Mean***	***Std Dev***	***Mean***	***Std Dev***	***Mean***	***Std Dev***	***Mean***	***Std Dev***
Upward	4.37	1.23	4.25	1.70	3.78	1.58	5.49	1.27
Lateral	4.34	1.14	4.39	1.63	3.55	1.44	5.41	1.20
Downward	4.14	1.36	4.01	1.79	3.60	1.53	5.21	1.32
Total	4.28	1.24	4.22	1.71	3.65	1.51	5.37	1.26

Table 5.12: Self-Esteem for Different Levels of Social Comparison

	Self-Esteem			Appearance			Social			Performance		
Variable	***F***	***Sig***	η_p^2	***F***	***Sig***	η_p^2	***F***	***Sig***	η_p^2	***F***	***Sig***	η_p^2
Centrality	.74	.39	.00	.108	.30	.01	.14	.71	.00	.86	.36	.00
Happiness	13.15	.00	.06	9.92	.00	.04	8.64	.00	.04	1.04	.31	.01
Ability	24.51	.00	.10	11.21	.00	.05	27.72	.00	.11	4.17	.04	.02
Opinion	1.90	.17	.01	.64	.42	.00	.10	.75	.00	5.72	.02	.03
Appearance	.49	.49	.00	.79	.38	.00	.73	.40	.00	1.92	.17	.01
Achievement	.23	.63	.00	2.36	.13	.01	.37	.54	.00	1.58	.21	.01
Private	.02	.90	.00	.04	.84	.00	.08	.78	.00	.10	.75	.00
Public	.19	.67	.00	3.71	.06	.02	11.90	.00	.05	1.87	.17	.01
Social Anxiety	99.32	.00	.31	55.34	.00	.20	67.04	.00	.23	31.15	.00	.12
Social Comparison	2.08	.13	.02	1.09	.34	.01	2.18	.12	.02	1.73	.18	.02
Vanity	.70	.40	.00	1.77	.19	.01	.18	.68	.00	.75	.39	.00
Social Comparison* Vanity	.71	.50	.01	.92	.40	.01	.67	.51	.01	.29	.75	.00

Table 5.13: Effects of Covariates and Experimental Conditions on Self-Esteem

The results show that factors pertaining to Ability and Social Anxiety had significant effects for Self-Esteem ($F = 24.51$, $p < .01$, $\eta_p^2 = .10$; and $F = 99.32$, $p < .01$, $\eta_p^2 = .31$, respectively) and its three underlying dimensions. Happiness was found to have a significant effect on Self-Esteem ($F = 13.15$, $p < .01$, $\eta_p^2 = .06$) and its Appearance ($F = 9.92$, $p < .01$, $\eta_p^2 = .04$) and Social ($F = 8.64$, $p < .01$, $\eta_p^2 = .04$) factors. Opinion had an effect on Performance ($F = 5.72$, $p < .05$, $\eta_p^2 = .03$), while Public Self-Consciousness affected Social ($F = 11.90$, $p < .01$, $\eta_p^2 = .05$). All other covariates produced no significant effect. Furthermore, the results show that the main effect of Social Comparison on Self-Esteem was not significant ($F = 2.08$, $p = .32$, $\eta_p^2 = .02$). This means that different levels of Social Comparison do not cause a variation in Self-Esteem. No interaction effects between Social Comparison and Vanity were found.

5.5.2 Relationship between Vanity and Motive Satisfaction

As proposed in Chapter Three, Hypothesis Two suggests that Achievement and Appearance Vanity have positive relationship with their corresponding Motive Satisfaction measure. First, multiple regression was undertaken in which the perception measure for Vanity factors were entered as the independent variables. Motive Satisfaction measures were entered as the dependent variable. Second, to further examine the effects of Vanity on Motive Satisfaction, three 3x2 between subjects factorial ANCOVAs were performed with Social Comparison

included to control for any effects. The results of the regression analysis are presented in Table 5.14.

		Initial Model					
		Conspicuous Consumption		**Social Value**		**Need for Uniqueness**	
		β	***Sig***	***β***	***Sig***	***β***	***Sig***
Appearance		.35	.00	.40	.00	.36	.00
Achievement		.50	.00	.36	.00	.39	.00
Overall	R^2	.31		.24		.24	
	F	52.63	.00	36.84	.00	36.80	.00

Table 5.14: Results of Regression Analysis for Motive Satisfaction

The results of the R^2 value indicate that Appearance and Achievement Vanity explained a significant amount of variation in all three Motive Satisfaction measures. The coefficient for Achievement ($\beta = .50$, $p < .01$) was higher than Appearance ($\beta = .35$, $p < .01$) for Conspicuous Consumption which is consistent with Hypothesis Two. However, Achievement ($\beta = .39$, $p < .01$) was also higher than Appearance ($\beta = .36$, $p < .01$) for Need for Uniqueness which is different to the result hypothesised, though the difference is small. In contrast, coefficient for Appearance ($\beta = .40$, $p < .01$) was higher than Achievement ($\beta = .36$, $p < .01$) for Social Value. Results of the regression indicate that perception of Vanity had a positive effect on Motive Satisfaction and that this was consistent for all three measure of Motive Satisfaction. Though the differences in strength of these effects between Achievement and Appearance were varied, *there is sufficient evidence to support Hypothesis Two*.

Moreover, the descriptives and results for the ANCOVA are presented first in Tables Table 5.15 and Table 5.16 which are used to further examine the effects of Vanity on Motive Satisfaction factors as well as determine any effects of covariates

	Conspicuous Consumption		**Social Value**		**Need for Uniqueness**	
Vanity	***Mean***	***Std Dev***	***Mean***	***Std Dev***	***Mean***	***Std Dev***
Appearance	2.82	.89	4.97	1.31	3.70	1.58
Achievement	3.09	.96	5.01	1.27	3.84	1.48
Total	2.96	.93	4.99	1.29	3.77	1.53

Table 5.15: Motive Satisfaction for Different Levels of Vanity

	Conspicuous Consumption			Social Value			Need for Uniqueness		
Variable	***F***	***Sig***	η_p^2	***F***	***Sig***	η_p^2	***F***	***Sig***	η_p^2
Centrality	4.55	.03	.02	.69	.41	.00	3.58	.06	.02
Happiness	.00	.96	.00	1.00	.32	.00	.16	.70	.00
Ability	9.70	.00	.04	6.14	.01	.03	4.26	.04	.02
Opinion	.01	.94	.00	7.37	.01	.03	1.19	.28	.01
Appearance	9.63	.00	.04	11.97	.00	.05	15.36	.00	.06
Achievement	5.25	.02	.02	.34	.56	.00	.69	.41	.00
Private	.08	.78	.00	.12	.73	.00	.17	.69	.00
Public	.25	.62	.00	.23	.63	.00	3.12	.08	.14
Social Anxiety	1.25	.26	.01	1.46	.23	.01	1.81	.18	.01
Social Comparison	1.10	.34	.01	2.15	.12	.02	.30	.74	.00
Vanity	2.45	.12	.01	.15	.70	.00	.00	.97	.00
Social Comparison*Vanity	.51	.60	.01	.66	.52	.01	.56	.57	.01

Table 5.16: Effects of Covariates and Experimental Conditions on Motive Satisfaction

The results show that factors pertaining to Ability and Appearance significantly impact on all three measures for Motive Satisfaction. Conspicuous Consumption was additionally impacted by Centrality ($F = 4.55$, $p < .05$, $\eta_p^2 = .02$) and Achievement ($F = 5.25$, $p < .05$, $\eta_p^2 = .02$). Opinion was also found to impact on Social Value ($F = 7.37$, $p < .05$, $\eta_p^2 = .03$). All other covariates produced no significant effect. Furthermore, the results show that the main effect of Vanity on Motive Satisfaction was not significant ($F = 2.45$, $p = .12$, $\eta_p^2 = .01$). This means that different types of Vanity do not cause a variation in Motive Satisfaction. No interaction effects between Vanity and Social Comparison were found.

5.5.3 Relationship between Self-Esteem and Purchase Consideration

Hypothesis Three hypothesised that there was a negative relationship between Self-Esteem and Purchase Consideration. To test this hypothesis, regression was undertaken, whereby Self-Esteem was entered as the independent variable with Purchase Consideration as the dependent variable. The results of this analysis are presented in Table 5.17.

		Purchase Consideration	
		Standardised β	***Sig***
State Self-Esteem		.06	.35
Overall	R^2	.01	
	F	.87	.35

Table 5.17: Results of Regression on Purchase Consideration

The results of the R^2 value indicates that the model did not explain a significant amount of variation (R^2 = .01, p = .35). Preliminary results of the regression analysis indicate that Self-Esteem has no effect on Purchase Consideration. As Self-Esteem is comprised of three distinct factors, multiple regression analysis was conducted to determine the individual effects of these dimensions on Purchase Consideration (see Table 5.18).

Examination of the distinct dimensions of Self-Esteem revealed varying results (see Table 5.18): R^2 increased to explain a significant amount of variation in Purchase Consideration (R^2 = .06, p < .01). Of the three dimensions, Performance did not have a significant effect on Purchase Consideration (β = .08, p = .26). Removal of Performance produced an increase in the F-ratio (F = 7.42) and the regression coefficient for Appearance (β = .25, p > .01). However the coefficient for Social decreased slightly (β = .23, p > .01). This indicates that the significant, positive effect of the Appearance dimension of Self-Esteem on Purchase Consideration is reverse to the relationship predicted in Hypothesis Three. *Hypothesis Three is therefore rejected.*

		Purchase Consideration			
		Initial Model		***Revised Model***	
		Standardised β	***Sig***	***Standardised β***	***Sig***
Appearance		.22	.00	.25	.00
Social		-.24	.00	-.23	.00
Performance		.08	.26		
Overall	R^2	.06		.06	
	F	5.37	.00	7.42	.00

Table 5.18: Results of Regression on Purchase Consideration

5.5.4 Relationship between Motive Satisfaction and Purchase Consideration

Hypothesis Four hypothesised that there was a positive relationship between Motive Satisfaction and Purchase Consideration. To test this hypothesis, multiple regression was undertaken, whereby Conspicuous Consumption, Social Value and Need for Uniqueness were entered as independent variables with Purchase Consideration as the dependent variable. The results of this analysis are presented in Table 5.19.

		Purchase Consideration			
		Initial Model		***Revised Model***	
		Standardised β	***Sig***	***Standardised β***	***Sig***
Conspicuous Consumption		.23	.01	.25	.00
Social Value		.04	.61		
Need for Uniqueness		.47	.00	.48	.00
Overall	R^2	.49		.48	
	F	74.04	.00	111.28	.00

Table 5.19: Results of Regression Analysis for Purchase Consideration

The results of the R^2 value indicates that the model explained a significant amount of variation ($R^2 = .49$, $p < .01$). Results of the regression indicate that the dimensions of Motive Satisfaction have a positive effect on Purchase Consideration.

An examination of the distinct dimensions of Motive Satisfaction revealed varying results: Of the three dimensions, Social Value did not have a significant effect on Purchase Consideration ($\beta = .04$, $p = .61$). Removal of Social Value produced an increase in the F-ratio ($F = 111.28$) and the regression coefficients for Conspicuous Consumption ($\beta = .25$, $p > .01$) and Need for Uniqueness ($\beta = .48$, $p > .01$). Both of these dimensions affect Purchase Consideration in a manner consistent with Hypothesis Four. Consequently, *Hypothesis Four is supported.*

5.5.5 Interaction Effect of Vanity and Social Comparison on Purchase Consideration

As proposed in Chapter Three, Hypothesis Five suggests that Social Comparison and Vanity interact to affect Purchase Consideration. To examine the interaction effect of Social Comparison and Vanity on Purchase Consideration, a 3x2 between subjects factorial

ANCOVA was performed with Social Comparison and Vanity entered as fixed factors, and the factors for Materialism, Social Comparison Orientation, Vanity-Concern and Self-Consciousness entered as covariates. The results of the regression analysis are presented in Table 5.20 and Table 5.21.

		Purchase Consideration	
Vanity	***Social Comparison***	***Mean***	***Std Dev***
Appearance	Upward	3.83	2.03
	Lateral	4.05	1.76
	Downward	3.91	1.86
Achievement	Upward	3.63	2.02
	Lateral	4.26	2.03
	Downward	3.49	1.92
Total		3.86	1.94

Table 5.20: Purchase Consideration for Different Experimental Conditions

	Purchase Consideration		
Variable	***F***	***Sig***	η_p^2
Centrality	.81	.37	.00
Happiness	.95	.33	.00
Ability	.24	.63	.00
Opinion	1.18	.28	.01
Appearance	16.20	.00	.07
Achievement	4.95	.03	.02
Private	.12	.74	.00
Public	.86	.35	.00
Social Anxiety	3.08	.08	.01
Social Comparison	.49	.61	.00
Vanity	.07	.80	.00
Social Comparison*Vanity	.45	.64	.00

Table 5.21: Effects of Conditions and Covariates on Purchase Consideration

The results show that factors pertaining to Appearance and Achievement Vanity-Concern significantly impact on Purchase Consideration. ($F = 16.20$, $p < .01$, $\eta_p^2 = .07$; and $F = 4.95$, $p <$

.05, η_p^2 = .02, respectively). All other covariates produced no significant effect. Furthermore, the results show that the main effect of Vanity on Purchase Consideration was not significant (F = .07, p = .80, η_p^2 = .00), nor was the effect of Social Comparison on Purchase Consideration significant (F = .49, p = .61, η_p^2 = .00). This means that different types of Vanity and Social Comparison do not cause a variation in Purchase Consideration. No interaction effects, between Vanity and Social Comparison, were found (F = .45, p = .64, η_p^2 = .00). Therefore, *Hypothesis Five was not supported.*

5.6 PATH ANALYSIS OF THE CONCEPTUAL MODEL

The final stage of analysis involved simultaneously accessing the relationships outlined in the conceptual model using path analysis. This chapter has so far examined the relationships between Social Comparison and Self-Esteem, Vanity and Motive Satisfaction, and Self-Esteem and Motive Satisfaction on Purchase Consideration, as well as the effect of Vanity and Social Comparison on Purchase Consideration. However, the specific path effects and overall model have yet to be tested. Consequently, The Partial Least Squares (PLS) approach was adopted for this research, and the analysis was conducted using the SmartPLS 3.0 software (Ringle, Wende, & Becker, 2014).

5.6.1 The Measurement Model

The reflective measurement model was adopted for this research (Hair, Hult, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2014). As per Hair et al. (2014) this theory operates on the basis that the measures used in the present research represent the effects of the underlying constructs. Prior to proceeding with the path analysis, the validity and reliability of the constructs used in the measurement model were checked. Due to the model in the present research is a reflective measurement model, assessment of the internal consistency (composite reliability), indicator reliability, convergent validity (average variance extracted) and discriminant validity was important (Hair et al., 2014).

Initially, factors were entered separately as individual constructs, for which all indicator items were entered. First, the internal consistency of each construct was assessed. Internal consistency is measured using composite reliability (P_c), values for which are presented in Table 5.22. P_c values for all constructs were above .9 indicating high internal consistency.

	AVE	***Composite Reliability***
Motive Satisfaction		
Conspicuous Consumption	.66	.94
Need for Uniqueness	.78	.98
Social Value	.77	.93
Purchase Consideration	.97	.99
Social Comparison		
Attractiveness	.92	.96
Rank	.73	.89
Self-Esteem		
Appearance	.82	.95
Performance	.78	.88
Social	.75	.90
Vanity		
Achievement	.89	.96
Appearance	.78	.95

Table 5.22: Composite Reliability and AVE

Next, indicators were examined for their convergent validity, which is "the extent to which a measure correlates positively with alternative measures of the same construct" (Hair et al., 2014, p. 102). Convergent validity requires considerations of both the outer loadings of the indicators (indicator reliability) and the average variance extracted (AVE). Examination revealed that all indicators had outer loadings above the .708 threshold for indicator reliability (as indicated in bold, see Table 5.23), demonstrating that the latent variables explain at least 50% of each indicator's variance and that the variance shared between indicator and construct is larger than the measurement error variance. (Hair et al., 2014). Additionally, each construct had an AVE value of .50 or higher indicating that the construct explains at least half of the variance of its indicators (Hair et al., 2014); see Table 5.22).

	SC_R	SC_A	VV_Ap	VV_Ac	SE_P	SE_S	SE_A	CC	SV	NU	PC
SC_2	**.84**	.41	.12	.14	-.19	-.20	-.12	.23	.15	.26	.21
SC_3	**.85**	.46	.10	.15	-.25	-.22	-.17	.28	.19	.26	.24
SC_4	**.88**	.49	.07	.10	-.28	-.20	-.22	.21	.12	.18	.12
SC_10	.47	**.96**	.20	.08	-.23	-.24	-.38	.11	.18	.07	.07
SC_11	.55	**.96**	.17	.05	-.25	-.29	-.38	.14	.18	.08	.05
VV_1	.04	.16	**.90**	-.23	.02	-.08	.02	.17	.31	.19	.18
VV_2	.09	.16	**.86**	-.14	-.02	-.19	.03	.27	.39	.29	.20
VV_3	.12	.18	**.91**	-.16	-.02	-.12	.05	.26	.31	.26	.18
VV_4	.13	.23	**.92**	-.18	-.03	-.12	.06	.26	.34	.30	.23
VV_5	.11	.11	**.85**	-.13	-.01	-.04	.12	.19	.23	.25	.15
VV_6	.11	.14	**.83**	-.10	-.03	-.04	.08	.23	.23	.27	.13
VV_7	.13	.05	-.14	**.95**	.06	-.09	.05	.41	.28	.31	.24
VV_9	.13	.06	-.17	**.94**	.04	-.10	.00	.42	.28	.34	.25
VV_10	.15	.08	-.18	**.94**	.02	-.15	-.02	.41	.27	.29	.23
SE_3	-.25	-.27	-.08	.03	**.89**	.30	.38	-.08	.01	-.06	.04
SE_5	-.26	-.17	.05	.05	**.88**	.29	.39	.00	.09	-.01	.13
SE_7	-.18	-.23	-.09	-.11	.32	**.84**	.42	-.25	-.28	-.15	-.10
SE_10	-.24	-.28	-.11	-.09	.33	**.91**	.49	-.23	-.29	-.16	-.08
SE_12	-.21	-.21	-.10	-.11	.21	**.84**	.32	-.30	-.32	-.25	-.12
SE_13	-.10	-.28	.06	-.03	.33	.37	**.89**	.03	-.07	.01	.17
SE_15	-.19	-.39	.01	-.05	.31	.40	**.88**	-.05	-.13	-.04	.05
SE_17	-.18	-.35	.11	.05	.45	.44	**.92**	.01	-.04	.03	.15
SE_18	-.27	-.39	.05	.05	.46	.50	**.92**	-.02	-.08	.01	.14
CC_3	.28	.10	.27	.33	-.05	-.25	.00	**.86**	.59	.65	.50
CC_4	.22	.06	.32	.26	-.02	-.24	.01	**.81**	.60	.64	.47
CC_5	.22	.08	.28	.29	-.02	-.23	-.02	**.82**	.64	.70	.55
CC_6	.22	.16	.25	.24	-.02	-.25	-.01	**.75**	.63	.61	.56
CC_7	.24	.14	.04	.60	.00	-.21	.03	**.77**	.58	.56	.45
CC_10	.21	.08	.12	.48	.00	-.18	.06	**.84**	.60	.64	.49
CC_12	.23	.12	.22	.37	-.08	-.29	.00	**.86**	.63	.67	.60
CC_13	.20	.13	.26	.25	-.10	-.32	-.13	**.80**	.71	.63	.47
SV_2	.19	.20	.34	.27	.00	-.32	-.06	.76	**.89**	.69	.51
SV_3	.13	.12	.30	.29	.10	-.32	-.07	.68	**.92**	.61	.51
SV_5	.17	.20	.31	.28	.05	-.31	-.09	.65	**.88**	.61	.51
SV_6	.15	.16	.28	.15	.04	-.25	-.07	.58	**.82**	.53	.37
NU_1	.29	.08	.27	.33	-.04	-.15	.00	.69	.60	**.91**	.59
NU_2	.24	.05	.25	.28	-.04	-.24	.00	.74	.65	**.92**	.65
NU_3	.26	.10	.26	.32	-.04	-.22	.01	.70	.61	**.88**	.63
NU_4	.29	.08	.32	.30	.00	-.19	.00	.72	.64	**.93**	.63
NU_5	.26	.09	.28	.26	-.09	-.14	.03	.69	.55	**.88**	.58
NU_6	.15	-.04	.21	.21	.00	-.09	.07	.55	.50	**.78**	.59
NU_7	.20	.05	.26	.31	-.04	-.21	.00	.70	.59	**.92**	.58
NU_8	.21	.10	.28	.27	-.02	-.13	-.01	.65	.56	**.87**	.57
NU_9	.22	.03	.29	.30	.00	-.18	-.01	.72	.67	**.92**	.62
NU_10	.24	.14	.23	.34	-.08	-.28	-.02	.76	.71	**.86**	.58
NU_11	.20	.11	.24	.31	-.02	-.27	-.04	.70	.69	**.87**	.57
PC_2	.23	.06	.20	.27	.08	-.11	.13	.63	.54	.67	**.99**
PC_3	.20	.06	.21	.24	.10	-.11	.15	.61	.54	.66	**.99**

Table 5.23: Outer Model Loadings and Cross-Loadings

Furthermore, an assessment of discriminant validity was required to determine that constructs were distinct from one another (Hair et al., 2014). The first measure for discriminant validity involves an examination of indicator cross-loadings for each construct. Table 5.23 presents the outer loadings for each indicator on its associated construct. It is evident that the outer loadings for each indicator on associated constructs are higher than loadings on all other constructs. However, this method of determining discriminant validity is considered by Hair et al. (2014) to be rather liberal. Consequently, the Fornell-Larcker criterion was used as the second measure due to it being more conservative (Hair et al., 2014). This approach compares the square root of the AVE values with the correlations for each latent variable. As seen in Table 5.24, the $\sqrt{AVE}$ for each construct is greater than the correlations with any other construct. Consequently, it was confirmed that all constructs were distinct.

	CC	NU	SV	PC	SC_A	SC_R	SE_A	SE_P	SE_S	VV_Ac	VV_Ap
CC	**.81**										
NU	.78	**.88**									
SV	.76	.70	**.88**								
PC	.63	.68	.55	**.99**							
SC_A	.13	.08	.19	.06	**.96**						
SC_R	.28	.26	.18	.22	.54	**.85**					
SE_A	-.01	.00	-.09	.14	-.39	-.21	**.90**				
SE_P	-.05	-.04	.05	.09	-.25	-.29	.43	**.88**			
SE_S	-.30	-.22	-.34	-.11	-.28	-.24	.48	.33	**.86**		
VV_Ac	.44	.33	.29	.26	.07	.15	.01	.04	-.12	**.94**	
VV_Ap	.27	.30	.35	.21	.19	.11	.06	-.02	-.12	-.17	**.88**

Values in bold denote $\sqrt{AVE}$ of respective constructs

Table 5.24: Fornell-Larcker Criterion Analysis

5.6.2 Structural Model

Having confirmed the reliability and validity of the construct measures, the structural model was assessed to determine the significance of the paths. However, prior to this analysis, the structural model was examined for collinearity to determine that the path coefficients were free from bias (Hair et al., 2014). Collinearity statistics for the indicator variables are presented in Table 5.25, which shows that there were no problems with multi-collinearity due to all VIFs being lower than 5.00 (Hair et al., 2014).

Set 01		Set 02		Set 03	
Construct	***VIF***	***Construct***	***VIF***	***Construct***	***VIF***
SC_R	1.40	VV_Ap	1.03	SE_P	1.35
SC_A	1.40	VV_Ac	1.03	SE_S	1.56
				SE_A	1.51
				CC	3.52
				NU	2.50
				SV	2.84

Table 5.25: Collinearity Assessment of the Structural Model

The next step in the analysis involved obtaining estimates for the structural model path coefficients. The model is presented in Figure 5.1. In the model, the path coefficients and their significance are displayed on the path lines between constructs. For each construct, the coefficient of determination (R^2) and their predictive relevance (Q^2) are displayed within the construct circle.

In order to determine the significance of the path coefficients, the t-statistics were obtained by means of a bootstrapping routine. The bootstrapping routine is a resampling approach that uses randomly drawn samples to estimate path models to determine standard errors of coefficient estimates which are then used to assess the statistical significance of coefficients (Hair et al., 2014). For this research, 5000 samples were set to determine path significance. Table 5.26 presents the path coefficients and their significance.

The results of the significance of the relationships were found to be relatively similar to those found in Section 5.5. Relationships between Social Comparison and Self-Esteem dimensions were the same as those found in the regression analysis. Similarly, the relationship Appearance and Achievement Vanity and Motive Satisfaction measures were the same, as were the relationships between Conspicuous Consumption, Need for Uniqueness and Purchase Consideration. Additionally, similar to the regression analysis, the PLS path analysis shows that none of the three dimensions for Self-Esteem had a significant relationship with Purchase Consideration.

	Path β	*t*	*Sig*
Conspicuous Consumption → Purchase Consideration	.23	2.50	**
Need for Uniqueness → Purchase Consideration	.46	5.48	**
Social Value → Purchase Consideration	.05	.67	NS
(SC) Attractiveness → (SE) Appearance	-.39	5.78	**
(SC) Attractiveness → (SE) Performance	-.13	1.96	NS
(SC) Attractiveness → (SE) Social	-.21	2.86	**
(SC) Rank → (SE) Appearance	-.00	.05	NS
(SC) Rank → (SE) Performance	-.22	2.85	**
(SC) Rank → (SE) Social	-.14	1.77	NS
(SE) Appearance → Purchase Consideration	.12	1.95	NS
(SE) Performance → Purchase Consideration	.07	1.38	NS
(SE) Social → Purchase Consideration	-.00	.00	NS
(VV) Achievement → Conspicuous Consumption	.50	10.19	**
(VV) Achievement → Need for Uniqueness	.40	7.28	**
(VV) Achievement → Social Value	.37	6.25	**
(VV) Appearance → Conspicuous Consumption	.36	5.89	**
(VV) Appearance → Need for Uniqueness	.37	6.21	**
(VV) Appearance → Social Value	.41	6.98	**

** significant at .01 level, NS = not significant

Table 5.26: Structural Model Path Coefficient and Significance

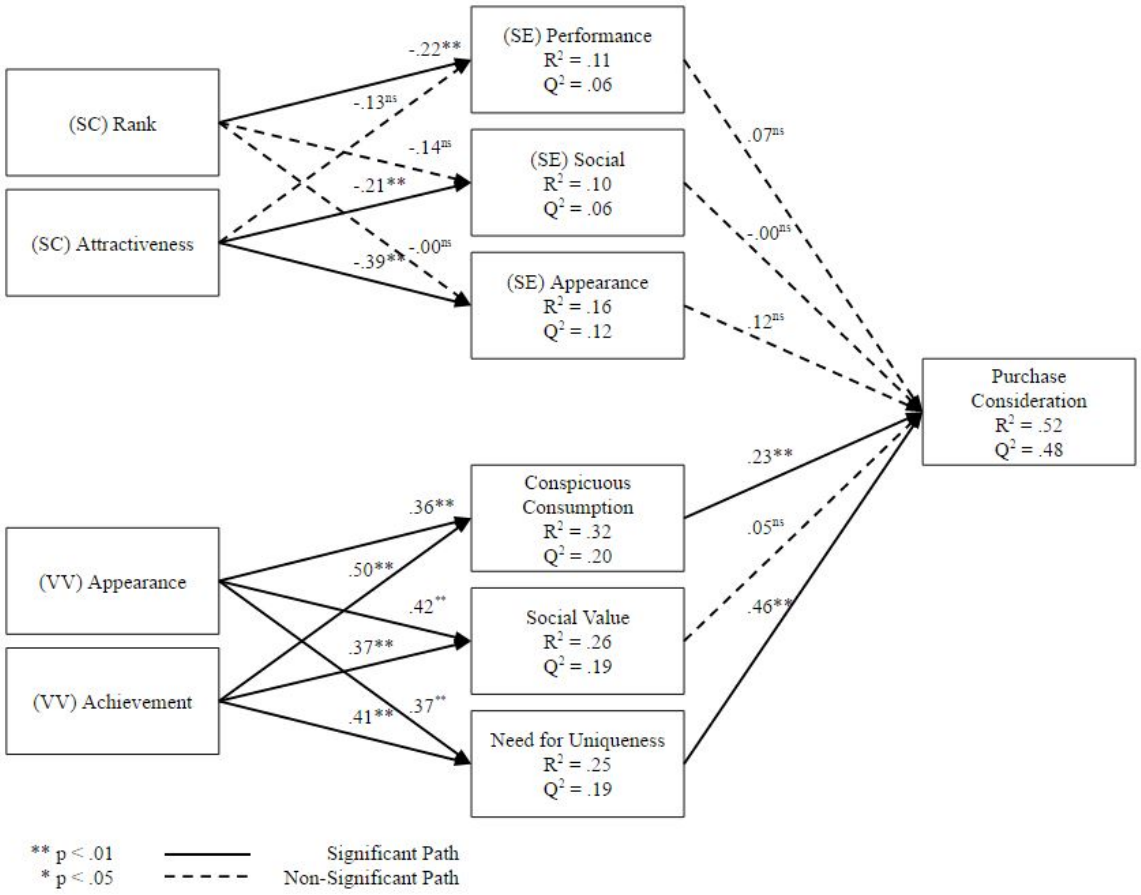

Figure 5.1: Full Conceptual Model

Table 5.26 shows that the negative relationships between Rank and Performance, and Attractiveness, Social and Appearance are significant. Conversely, the relationships between Rank, Appearance, and Social were not significant. Nor was the relationship between Attractiveness and Performance. However, the relationships that were significant were between Social Comparison factors and Self-Esteem factors were between those that are conceptually similar, *further reinforcing the earlier support for Hypothesis One*. Furthermore Appearance had the greatest effect on Social Value ($\beta = .42$, $p > .01$), as opposed to Need for Uniqueness ($\beta = .37$, $p > .01$). However, Achievement Vanity was found to have the largest significant relationship with its corresponding Motive Satisfaction measure (Conspicuous Consumption). Subsequently, the relationships between Conspicuous Consumption and Need for Uniqueness with Purchase Consideration were confirmed, *reinforcing previous findings supporting Hypotheses Two and Four*. Additionally, path analysis indicated that Self-Esteem did not in

fact have a significant relationship with Purchase Consideration. *Providing further support for Hypothesis Three.*

Next, the total effects of the constructs to include indirect effects were calculated. Consequently, as non-significant paths affect the size of the total effect sizes and the coefficients of determination (R^2) and need to be deleted and the model rerun. However, as none of the relationships between Self-Esteem and Purchase Consideration were significant, this section of the model was consequently deleted. Further, as Social Value was found to have no significant effect on Purchase Consideration, this construct was also removed and the model rerun (see Table 5.27 and Figure 5.2). Moreover, due to the deletion of these variables and relationships from the model, Hypothesis Five was not tested at this stage. Instead, the hypothesised interaction between Vanity and Social Comparison on Purchase Consideration was examined further in Section 5.7.

	Path β	***t***	***Sig***
Conspicuous Consumption → Purchase Consideration	.26	3.17	**
Need for Uniqueness → Purchase Consideration	.48	5.98	**
(VV) Achievement → Conspicuous Consumption	.50	10.04	**
(VV) Achievement → Need for Uniqueness	.40	7.15	**
(VV) Appearance → Conspicuous Consumption	.36	6.11	**
(VV) Appearance → Need for Uniqueness	.37	6.39	**

** significant at .01 level

Table 5.27: Structural Model Path Coefficients and Significance

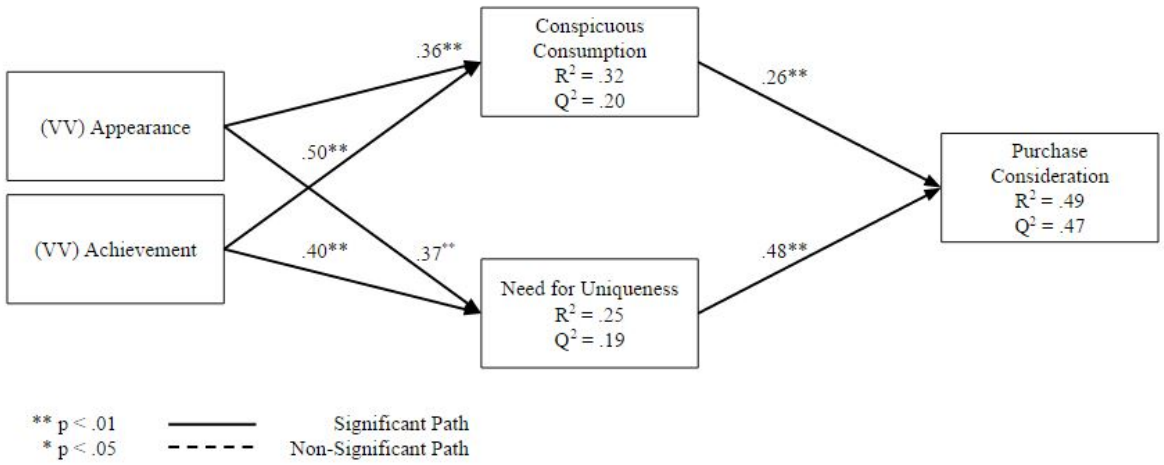

Figure 5.2: Structural Model with Non-Significant Paths and Constructs Removed

An examination of the coefficients of determination in the rerun model show that Appearance and Achievement Vanity explain 32%, 26% and 25% of the variance in Conspicuous Consumption, Social Value and Need for Uniqueness respectively. Subsequently, these three measures for Motive Satisfaction go on to explain 49% of the variance in Purchase Consideration. In line with the Hair et al. (2014) interpretation of R^2 values, these are considered to be high in areas such as consumer behaviour. Thus, the R^2 values presented here are considered satisfactory.

The next step involved the calculation of the f^2 statistic. This value is the effect size and reflects the change in R^2 of an endogenous construct when an exogenous construct is removed from the model which determines whether the exogenous construct has a substantial effect on the endogenous construct (Hair et al., 2014). Consequently, f^2 was calculated using the following formula:

$$f^2 = \frac{R^2_{included} - R^2_{excluded}}{1 - R^2_{included}}$$

(Hair et al., 2014)

The above formula was used to calculate the effect size of Appearance and Achievement Vanity on Conspicuous Consumption and Need for Uniqueness, as well as the effect size of Conspicuous Consumption and Need for Uniqueness on Purchase Consideration. It is evident that Conspicuous Consumption had a relatively week effect on Purchase Consideration. In contrast all other exogenous variables had medium sized effects above the .15 threshold (Hair et al., 2014). Results for this analysis are presented in Table 5.28.

	CC			**NU**			**PC**		
	β	f^2	q^2	β	f^2	q^2	β	f^2	q^2
VV_Ap	.36	.18	.10	.37	.19	.12			
VV_Ac	.50	.25	.19	.40	.21	.15			
CC							.26	.06	.06
NU							.48	.18	.17

Table 5.28: Path Coefficients, f^2 and q^2

In addition to establishing the effect size, it was also important to determine the predictive relevance (q^2) of the different exogenous constructs on the endogenous constructs. The first step in this process requires the calculation of Q^2 for each of the endogenous constructs. A blindfolding procedure was used, for which an omission distance (D) of 7 was used. Thus,

where blindfolding is a sample reuse technique, every 7th data point in the endogenous constructs indicators were omitted and parameters were estimated with the remaining data points (Hair et al., 2014). Subsequent to blindfolding, calculation of q^2 followed a similar process as the calculation for f^2, where Q^2 was calculated for each endogenous construct with the inclusion and exclusion of each exogenous construct in the model. The same formula for f^2 was used and is as follows:

$$q^2 = \frac{Q^2_{included} - Q^2_{excluded}}{1 - Q^2_{included}}$$

(Hair et al., 2014)

The $q2$ values are interpreted in the same way as f^2. Specifically, it is evident that Achievement Vanity had moderate predictive relevance for Conspicuous Consumption and Need for Uniqueness. Similarly, Need for Uniqueness has a moderate predictive relevance for Purchase Consideration due to the q^2 being greater than the .15 threshold (Hair et al., 2014). In contrast, Appearance Vanity has less predicative relevance for Conspicuous Consumption similar to Conspicuous Consumptions relevance for Purchase Consideration. The results of this calculation are presented in Table 5.28.

5.7 FURTHER ANALYSIS

Further analysis was conducted to determine the interaction effect of Social Comparison and Vanity on Purchase Consideration and the structural model. The model was rerun for both Appearance and Achievement Vanity conditions. For Social Comparison, as the manipulation checks revealed that Downward and Lateral conditions were not significantly different (see Section 5.4) these conditions were recoded into the same condition. Therefore, the model was rerun for Upward and Lateral/Downward comparison.

For the experimental conditions, the model for the Appearance condition explained 53% of variance occurring within Purchase Consideration (higher than original model), where Achievement only explained 45% (lower than original model). However, the relationship between Appearance and Need for Uniqueness in the Appearance condition was not significant. Similarly, in the Achievement condition the relationship between Achievement and Need for Uniqueness was no longer significant. In terms of Social Comparison, the model for the Upward condition explained 62% of variance occurring within Purchase Consideration, compared to just 43% for the Lateral/Downward condition. It is evident that Upward Social

Comparison does indeed affect Purchase consideration greater than Lateral or Downward Social Comparison. However, contradictory to Hypothesis Five, Appearance Vanity has a stronger effect on Purchase Consideration than Achievement. Therefore, *there is partial support for Hypothesis Five.*

In addition to splitting the data and rerunning the model for different levels of the experimental conditions, this procedure was repeated for the covariates, the models for which are presented in Appendices 8.10 to 8.13. Specifically, this included testing the model for different levels of Self-Consciousness, Materialism, Social Comparison Orientation and Vanity-Concern where the data was split into high and low levels of each covariate (where high > 4, low ≤ 4).

Notable results included the increase in R^2 for low public self-consciousness and social anxiety, and high private self-consciousness compared to the original mode. High Centrality (Materialism) increased the strength of the relationships of Achievement Vanity on Motive Satisfaction measures, but decreased those relationships for Appearance Vanity. In contrast, High Happiness (Materialism) increased all relationships between Vanity and Motive Satisfaction but resulted in Conspicuous Consumption not having a significant relationship with Purchase Consideration. Vanity-Concern (as opposed to Vanity-View as a perception measure for Vanity manipulations) produced interesting results where High Appearance-Concern produced larger path coefficients for Appearance relationships with Motive Satisfaction but smaller relationships for Achievement. Similarly, High Achievement-Concern produced larger path coefficients for Achievement relationships with Motive Satisfaction by smaller coefficients for Appearance relationships. Furthermore, the conceptual model didn't hold for Low Appearance as all connections in the model were broken as a result of four of the six relationships being non-significant. Most notable is that High Achievement produced the highest R^2 value for Purchase Consideration than any other covariate or the original model (R^2 = .64). Conversely, Low Achievement also produced the lowest R^2 value for Purchase Consideration (R^2 = .36).

5.8 HYPOTHESES RESULTS AND CHAPTER SUMMARY

The main aim of this chapter was to examine the hypotheses outlined in Chapter Three. An overview of the hypotheses testing and a summary of the results are presented in Table 5.29. The results are discussed in more detail in Chapter Six.

	Hypothesis	Supported
H_1	Social Comparison has a negative relationship with Self-Esteem	✓
H_2	Vanity has a positive relationship with corresponding Motive Satisfaction measures	✓
H_3	Self-Esteem has a negative relationship with Purchase Consideration	×
H_4	Motive Satisfaction has a positive relationship with Purchase Consideration	✓
H_5	The Interaction Effect of Upward Social Comparison and Achievement Vanity will yield the highest Purchase Consideration	$✓_p$

$✓_p$ indicates partial support for the hypothesis

Table 5.29: Summary of Hypothesis Tests Results

The first hypothesis examined the relationship between Social Comparison and Self-Esteem. Specifically, it was hypothesised that Social Comparison would have a negative relationship on perceived Self-Esteem. Both regression and PLS path analysis showed that there were significant negative relationships between individuals factors of Social Comparison and Self-Esteem. Therefore, *Hypothesis One was supported.*

Hypothesis Two examined the relationship between Vanity and the measures of Motive Satisfaction. Specifically, it was hypothesised that Appearance Vanity would have a stronger, positive relationship with the adapted Need for Uniqueness measure of Motive Satisfaction and that Achievement Vanity would have a stronger, positive relationship with the Conspicuous Consumption measure. Both Appearance and Achievement were proposed to have an equal relationship with Social Value. Though regression and PLS path analysis showed that Achievement Vanity had a stronger relationship with Conspicuous Consumption, Appearance had the strongest relationship with Social Value as opposed to Need for Uniqueness. Conversely, the relationships between Achievement and Appearance with Need for Uniqueness were considered to be relatively intermediary. However, the overall relationship between Vanity and Motive Satisfaction were significant and *Hypothesis Two was supported.*

Hypothesis Three and Four focused on the relationship between Self-Esteem, Motive Satisfaction and Purchase Consideration. Conspicuous Consumption and Need for Uniqueness were found to have significant positive relationships with Purchase Consideration. Moreover, none of the three dimensions for Self-Esteem had significant relationships with Purchase Consideration. Hence, *Hypothesis Three was rejected and Hypothesis Four was supported.*

Hypothesis Five explored the interaction of Social Comparison and Vanity and the effect on Purchase Consideration. While the ANCOVA revealed no significant interaction effect, path

analysis indicated that Upward Comparison explained greater variation in Purchase Consideration than Lateral/Downward Comparison. Further, though the original hypothesis predicted that Achievement Vanity would have grater implications for Purchase Consideration, the path analysis indicated that Appearance had greater explaining power. Therefore, *Hypothesis Five was partially supported.*

Chapter Six further discusses these findings in further detail.

6 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter concludes the thesis by presenting a discussion of the major findings of the research. Practical and theoretical contributions and implications of the research are explained and suggestions for future research are suggested.

6.2 MAJOR RESEARCH FINDINGS

6.2.1 Summary of Research Purpose

Social display and self-presentational concerns are considered to be important drivers in the market for luxury fashion products (Lurie, 1981; O'Cass & McEwen, 2006; Solomon, 1983). As such, addressing self-concept portrayal and enhancement in advertising messages for fashion products is of important concern for marketers and brand managers. Where social comparison provides individuals with social information pertaining to their relative social standing and assists in the assignment of social identity to the self (Festinger, 1954; Solomon, 1983), vanity determines which aspects of the self are evaluated and are of the highest concern for an individual (Netemeyer et al., 1995; Wang & Waller, 2006; Wiedmann et al., 2011). Therefore, marketers need to understand how these constructs can be addressed in advertising messages to illicit intended product and brand evaluations, as well as give rise to purchase behaviour. To achieve this, this research investigated the relationships between social comparison and vanity on purchase consideration.

Specifically, the present research investigated the relationships between social comparison and consumer vanity, with self-esteem and motive satisfaction. In turn, the relationship of self-esteem and motive satisfaction with purchase consideration was addressed while also assessing the role of public self-consciousness. It was predicted that social comparison would motivate individuals to improve the way the self is perceived when social comparison with a better-off other was induced (Festinger, 1954; Workman & Lee, 2011). Appeals to vanity were hypothesised to affect the way in which products were evaluated as either satisfying achievement or appearance related expressive motives for consumption (Durvasula et al., 2001). Furthermore, public self-consciousness was considered to be a major covariate due to

individuals who are high in public self-consciousness showing more concern for establishing favourable public images and projections of the self-concept (Fenigstein et al., 1975; Sharp et al., 2011).

To test the dependence relationships hypothesised in Chapter Three, an online between-subjects experiment was conducted. The implications of the findings of this experiment are discussed in this chapter.

6.2.2 Relationship between Social Comparison and Self-Esteem

Based on the social comparison and self-esteem literature, this study proposed that Social Comparison would have a negative relationship with Self-Esteem, which was examined in Hypothesis One.

It was predicted that as social comparison moved from comparison with a worse-off other to a better-off other, individuals' self-esteem would decrease. The results of the PLS procedure indicated that Social Comparison did indeed have a negative relationship with Self-Esteem. This finding is aligned with the social comparison literature that addresses advertising messages, which found that advertisements that used upward comparison targets negatively impacted on consumers' self-esteem and satisfaction with the self (Dahl et al., 2012; Lennon & Rudd, 1994; Mandel et al., 2006; Micu & Coulter, 2012; Yu et al., 2011). The results also align with the portion of social comparison literature that specifically addresses the types of social comparison and the impact on self-esteem. This segment of the literature indicates that in 'normal' circumstances (Buunk et al., 1990), social comparison leads to contrastive outcomes in which divergence between the self and the comparison target are most salient, due to the absence of psychological closeness (Mandel et al., 2006; Suls et al., 2002). Such contrastive outcomes result in upward comparisons negatively impacting on self-esteem and downward comparisons positively impacting on self-esteem (Mandel et al., 2006), which was evident in the present research. Furthermore, the results indicated that the significant relationships between Social Comparison and Self-Esteem were only present between those factors that were conceptually similar. Specifically, only the Rank dimension of Social Comparison which evaluated the competence, talent and strength of another, had a significant relationship with the Performance dimension of Self-Esteem which measured an individual's self-perceptions of intelligence and ability. Similarly, the Attractiveness dimension of Social Comparison which assessed the desirability and attractiveness of another, had significant relationships with the

Social and Appearance dimensions of Self-Esteem which determined an individual's self-perceptions of impressions on others, attractiveness and image. Thus, the results of the present research are consistent with the findings in the social comparison literature insofar as they confirm the relationship between social comparison and self-esteem.

6.2.3 Relationship between Vanity and Motive Satisfaction

Grounded in the consumer vanity and expressive motive literature, this study proposed that Vanity would have a positive relationship with corresponding measures of Motive Satisfaction, which was examined in Hypothesis Two.

It was anticipated that different types of vanity appeals would result in the advertised product being evaluated as satisfying motives that were conceptually linked with that vanity appeal. The results of the PLS procedure indicated that the Achievement Vanity appeal did indeed have the strongest positive relationship with the Conspicuous Consumption measure of Motive Satisfaction. This finding is reflective of the achievement vanity, conspicuous and status consumption literature (Durvasula et al., 2001; Hudders, 2012; Netemeyer et al., 1995). However, Appearance Vanity did not have the strongest positive relationship with the adapted Need for Uniqueness measure which was recoded to encapsulate image portrayal. Instead, Appearance Vanity had the strongest relationship with Social Value which evaluated a product with respect to overall impression and perception management with respect to neither portrayal of achievement or appearance. This suggests that appearance aspects of vanity capture a much broader spectrum of consumer self-presentational views and concerns than achievement vanity. However, when Public Self-Consciousness and Social Anxiety was high and when Private Self-Consciousness was low, the relationship between Appearance Vanity and Need for Uniqueness was the strongest. This is aligned with the self-consciousness literature which explains that publicly self-conscious individuals, and those who experience social anxiety, pay more attention to the aspects of the self that are socially observable (Sharp et al., 2011), place more importance on self-presentation (Bloch & Richins, 1992), and are more concerned with impressing others (Fenigstein et al., 1975). The results indicate that appearance aspects of vanity are driven by more generic self-presentational concerns and that public self-consciousness and social anxiety strengthened the relationship between Appearance and Need for Uniqueness, which encapsulates image portrayal. Thus, the results of the current study are aligned with the literature.

6.2.4 Relationship between Self-Esteem and Purchase Consideration

Based on the social comparison and self-esteem literature, this study proposed that Self-Esteem would have a negative relationship with Purchase Consideration, which was examined in Hypothesis Three.

It was predicted that low self-esteem would result in increased purchase consideration. This was based on the premise that engagement in upward comparison, which has negative implications for self-esteem, has been found to be positively related to higher purchase intentions (Chan & Prendergast, 2008). Though there are several studies that indicate that undesirable discrepancies resulting from upward comparison motivate consumers to mitigate the divergence (Dahl et al., 2012; Festinger, 1954; Wood, 1989) through consumption behaviour (Crusius & Mussweiler, 2012; Lennon & Rudd, 1994), this was not the case for this research. Though the regression analysis indicated that there was a small significant relationship between dimensions of Self-Esteem and Purchase Consideration, these results did not hold for the PLS procedure. Path analysis instead indicated that given the relationship between Social Comparison and Self-Esteem, the relationship between Self-Esteem and Purchase Consideration was not significant.

6.2.5 Relationship between Motive Satisfaction and Purchase Consideration

Grounded in the vanity and expressive motive literature, this study proposed that Motive Satisfaction has a positive relationship with Purchase Consideration, which was examined in Hypothesis Four.

It was predicted that when a product was evaluated as successfully satisfying expressive motives, increased purchase consideration would ensue. The results of the PLS procedure indicated that the Social Value measure of Motive Satisfaction did not have a significant relationship with Purchase Consideration. Though the literature suggests that social value plays a key role in both post and pre-purchase situations and has important implications for consumers' willingness to purchase (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001), the scale used here was developed and tested within the context of consumer durables (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001), which is not the case of the present study. However, Conspicuous Consumption and Need for Uniqueness did indeed have significant positive relationships with Purchase Consideration. This finding is aligned with the literature, which shows that when individuals consume to

portray identity and achievement, they purchase goods that satisfy motives arising from consumer vanity (Dittmar, 1994; Durvasula et al., 2001; Wiedmann et al., 2011). Moreover, these motives have been found to be key drivers in stimulating product demand and consumption behaviour (Corneo & Jeanne, 1997).

6.2.6 Interaction Effect of Vanity and Social Comparison on Purchase Consideration

Based on the social comparison and vanity literature, this study proposed that Social Comparison and Vanity would interact to affect Purchase Consideration, which was examined in Hypothesis Five.

It was predicted that when individuals were exposed to an upward target, in conjunction to an appeal to achievement vanity, purchase consideration would be higher. This was based on the literature which indicates that when individuals engage in upward comparison, consumption behaviour is higher (Chan & Prendergast, 2008). Further, the literature also reveals that communication of achievement is a major consideration in evaluating luxury fashion products (Netemeyer et al., 1995; Workman & Lee, 2011). While the ANCOVA revealed that there was no interaction effect between Vanity and Social Comparison on Purchase Consideration, path analysis indicated that when the conditions were separated out and the model rerun, there was evidence of an effect. Upward Comparison resulted in the structural model having greater explanatory power for Purchase Consideration when compared to Lateral/Downward Comparison. Specifically, variance occurring within Purchase Consideration explained by the model was considerably higher for respondents where Upward Comparison was induced. However, in contrast to the hypothesised effect, Achievement Vanity did not produce a similar result. Instead, the PLS analysis showed that Appearance Vanity was better at explaining variation in Purchase Consideration. This result can be explained by previous results (see Section 6.2.3) where Appearance aspects of vanity were found to capture a greater spectrum of self-presentational concerns.

6.3 PATH ANALYSIS OF THE FULL CONCEPTUAL MODEL

Apart from using path analysis to test the individual hypotheses, PLS was used to simultaneously examine the dependence relationships outlined in the conceptual model, and to test the effect of covariates.

The results of the path analyses confirmed findings discussed in Sections 6.2.2, 6.2.3, and 6.2.5 and refuted results found previously in the ANCOVA and regression analysis as discussed in Sections 6.2.4 and 6.2.6. Specifically, analysis of the model did not confirm the relationship between Self-Esteem and Purchase Consideration. Consequently, this resulted in a substantial redevelopment of the model that elicited the removal of Social Comparison and Self-Esteem, leaving only Vanity and Motive Satisfaction to predict Purchase Consideration. However, even with the removal of a substantial segment of the model, the remaining latent constructs still provided explanation for almost half of the variation in Purchase Consideration. In some cases, the explanatory power of the exogenous variables exceeded this (discussed in Sections 6.3.1). Overall, the final model explained a substantial amount of variation in not only Purchase Consideration, but Conspicuous Consumption and Need for Uniqueness as well.

6.3.1 Effects of Covariate Variables

The effects of the four covariate variables and their underlying factors were examined in this research, which included Self-Consciousness (Private, Public, and Social Anxiety), Materialism (Centrality and Happiness), Social Comparison Orientation (Ability and Opinion), and Vanity-Concern (Appearance and Achievement).

The main result of the covariate analysis was the effect of Vanity-Concern on the relationships between Vanity and Motive Satisfaction. Specifically, the ANCOVA analyses revealed that Appearance-Concern, rather than Achievement-Concern, had small significant positive effects on all three measures of Motive Satisfaction. Further PLS analysis involved testing the model for different levels of Appearance and Achievement-Concern. This analysis revealed that the strength of the relationships between different dimensions of Vanity and Motive Satisfaction differed depending on respondents' innate concern for Appearance or Achievement. Specifically, the results indicated that the relationships between Appearance, Conspicuous Consumption and Need for Uniqueness were considerably stronger for respondents with high Appearance-Concern. Moreover, when respondents had low Appearance-Concern, paths became non-significant and the model no longer held. Similarly, the relationships between Achievement, Conspicuous Consumption and Need for Uniqueness were stronger for respondents with high Achievement-Concern. Furthermore, it was found that high Achievement-Concern increased the explanatory power of the model in explaining the

variance occurring within Purchase Consideration, above and beyond the original model, any other covariate, or experimental condition.

The effects of Self-Consciousness were accounted for, as this has been found to affect the concern individuals' hold regarding the way they are perceived by others, and the importance of vanity appeals in their decision making (Bloch & Richins, 1992; Workman & Lee, 2011). The ANCOVAs revealed that the Social Anxiety component of Self-Consciousness had considerable positive effects on Self-Esteem and its three underlying dimensions. However, path analysis resulted in this branch of the model being deleted and the ANCOVAs did not indicate any significant effects of Self-Consciousness on Motive Satisfaction. Despite this, further PLS analysis involved testing the model for different levels of Private, Public and Social Anxiety components of Self-Consciousness and revealed that the effects of Self-Consciousness were in fact present and that they differed depending on respondents' disposition for a particular Self-Consciousness dimension. Specifically, it was found that the strength of the relationships between Achievement, Conspicuous Consumption and Need for Uniqueness were considerably stronger when respondents were low in Social Anxiety. Furthermore, the variance explained within Conspicuous Consumption and Need for Uniqueness increased as a result. In both cases, these statistics were higher than the original model, any other covariate, or experimental condition. Conversely, the strength of the relationships between Appearance, Conspicuous Consumption and Need for Uniqueness increased for respondents who were high in Social Anxiety. This shows that Social Anxiety determines focal aspects of self-presentation for an individual. Furthermore, path analysis also indicated diminished path significance for respondent's who were low in Public Self-Consciousness. Specifically, the model only held for respondents who were high in Public Self-Consciousness, indicating that public self-consciousness is an antecedent to self-presentational behaviour.

Though Social Comparison Orientation quantifies differences in social comparison between individuals, the ANCOVAs revealed that Social Comparison Orientation factors had effects on both Self-Esteem and Motive Satisfaction. Specifically, Ability had significant effects on all dimensions of Self-Esteem and the three measures for Motive Satisfaction, though the strength of these effects was greater for Self-Esteem. Furthermore, despite the Social Comparison and Self-Esteem construct being removed from the model in path analysis. The PLS procedure indicated that Ability and Opinion still impacted on Conspicuous Consumption and Need for Uniqueness. Specifically, the strength of the relationships between Appearance, Conspicuous

Consumption, and Need for Uniqueness were stronger for respondent's who were low in Ability and Opinion. In other words, when respondents' showed little concern for comparing themselves to the others based on differences in capability and attitudes, the strength of the relationship between Appearance-Vanity and Motive Satisfaction increased. This is contradictory to the literature in that Lertwannawit and Mandhachitara (2012) indicate that individuals who are more inclined to engage in social comparison place more emphasis on image and material symbols. However, this could be due to the measure for Social Comparison Orientation disregarding appearance related aspects of self-evaluation.

Finally, Centrality and Happiness dimensions of Materialism had small positive effects on Motive Satisfaction, meaning that respondents who are highly materialistic evaluated the advertised product as slightly better at satisfying expressive motives. This aligned with the materialism literature which explains that highly materialistic consumers show greater concern for achievement and appearance portrayal (Froh et al., 2011; O'Cass, 2001; Wiedmann et al., 2011). Furthermore, several studies show that materialism has a significant impact on consumption behaviour (Belk, 1984; Froh et al., 2011; Lertwannawit & Mandhachitara, 2012; Richins & Dawson, 1992) which is evident in the path analysis results. Specifically, the relationship between Conspicuous Consumption and Purchase Consideration was stronger for respondents who were high in Centrality.

6.4 DISCUSSION OF MAIN FINDINGS

The results confirm the expressive motive and luxury goods literature (Hudders, 2012) and the idea that consumers purchase luxury goods for reasons beyond utility maximisation (Belk, 1984, 1985; Dittmar & Pepper, 1994; Fitzmaurice & Comegys, 2006). This was evident in the models ability to explain half of the variance in intended purchase behaviour when only expressive motives and evaluation of the symbolic properties of a luxury fashion product were accounted for. Where expressive motives arise when a product has the ability to communicate latent information to others (McCracken, 1986), the present research is supportive in indicating that consumers do in fact acquire goods not for the practical benefits, but because of what the products mean (Levy, 1959), and their communicative standing (McCracken, 1986; Richins, 1994b; Vigneron & Johnson, 1999). Specifically, the present research provides supportive evidence of consumers evaluating goods in terms of their ability to communicate identity and

achievement, which were found to have a dominant, positive role in explaining purchase behaviour.

In addition to expressive motives positively transitioning into purchase behaviour, the present research indicates that vanity appeals made in advertising messages can effectively be used to evoke product evaluation in terms of satisfying these expressive motives. Specifically, vanity appeals positively influence the saliency of the dimensions for which a product is evaluated. Therefore, as impression management and self-concept portrayal is an important diver in the market for luxury goods (Corneo & Jeanne, 1997; Dittmar, 1994; O'Cass & Frost, 2002; Vigneron & Johnson, 1999; Wiedmann et al., 2011), the evidence of the ability of vanity appeals to influence and control saliency of evaluative criteria, as presented here, is of importance. Moreover, the present study showed that where achievement appeals in advertising give rise to evaluations aligned with conspicuous motives, appearance appeals yield a far broader spectrum of evaluative criteria. Specifically, appearance encapsulates self-presentational concerns pertaining to all aspects of the self that are socially observable above those defined as concerning achievement.

In addition to imposed vanity appeals, consumers' inherent disposition towards vanity was also found to be of significance. Consumers who have concern for achievement or appearance aspects of vanity were shown to engage in evaluation of vanity appeals and the product in a way that served self-congruency. Specifically, the relationship between perceptions of a vanity appeal and subsequent product evaluation for consumers who are considered by the literature to be of high vanity-concern (Netemeyer et al., 1995; Wang & Waller, 2006; Wiedmann et al., 2011) were stronger when that vanity appeal was congruent with the consumers preexisting disposition towards that particular aspect of vanity. In other words, when a consumer is predisposed to express concern for appearance or achievement aspects of vanity, the consumer will in turn be more likely to have stronger perceptions of that vanity appeal which in turn has stronger influence over the way in which a product is evaluated. Thus, the present research shows supporting evidence for the self-concept and self-enhancement literature which states that in the context of self-concept presentation, individuals seek goods they consider to be congruent to their self-concept and the image they want to project (Banister & Hogg, 2004; Birdwell, 1968; Charmley et al., 2013; Dolich, 1969; Gould, 1993; Richins, 1994b). When an individual shows inclination to a particular aspect of the self-concept (the appearance or achievement component), this predisposition will frame advertising messages and increase

saliency of evaluation dimensions that ensure the outcome is congruent with the self. Thus, vanity-concern moderates the effectiveness of vanity appeals in driving product evaluation. Furthermore, when individuals are exposed to advertising messages that highlight incongruence, self-esteem is negatively affected.

Specifically, this research shows that when individuals are presented with a social comparison target that is divergent from the self in an advertising message, incongruent dimensions are the most salient and self-esteem is negatively impacted. Thus, the present research shows support for the social comparison literature that indicates that in normal circumstances, contrastive outcomes of social comparison ensue (Buunk et al., 1990; Mandel et al., 2006; Suls et al., 2002) and that contrastive outcomes negatively impact on self-esteem (Dahl et al., 2012; Lennon & Rudd, 1994; Mandel et al., 2006; Micu & Coulter, 2012; Yu et al., 2011). Moreover, specific components of social comparison were found to connect with the underlying dimensions of self-esteem that are conceptually akin to one another. This indicates that when a comparison target gives rise to the evaluation of specific attributes held by that target, if divergence is present, the unfavourable evaluation of those attributes will directly impact on those corresponding aspects of an individuals' self-esteem.

However, this research was unable to provide support for the literature that indicates that in circumstances where self-esteem is negatively impacted by social comparison, consumers will undergo compensatory consumption (Chan & Prendergast, 2008). One explanation for this is that low self-esteem can make individuals confused about who they are and in turn make them more susceptible to influence (Baumeister, Bushman, & Campbell, 2000). Negative impacts on self-esteem may drive consumers to engage in defensive self-enhancement (Luhtanen & Crocker, 1992; Raskin, Novacek, & Hogan, 1991a) which includes increasing ones' social desirability (Raskin, Novacek, & Hogan, 1991b) as gaining approval from others is one way of regulating self-esteem (Raskin et al., 1991a). Therefore, where social comparison negatively impacts on self-esteem, consumers are then more susceptible to the influence of advertising appeals, such as those pertaining to vanity. Consequently, consumers will seek ways to increase social desirability and will be more likely to evaluate advertising messages and products favourably in accordance with their search for self-enhancement. Thus, consumer self-esteem arising from social comparison may instead mediate the relationship between vanity and motive satisfaction.

Furthermore, results of this study support the literature in indicating that individuals who are high in public self-consciousness are more concerned about communicating a favourable self-concept through the portrayal of appearance and achievements (Workman & Lee, 2011). Evidently, when individuals are not publicly self-conscious, the relationships between latent constructs diminished, indicating that self-presentational behaviour is only observable when consumers have a predisposition toward public self-consciousness. Thus, public self-consciousness is an antecedent to the model and self-presentational concerns. This provides empirical evidence for previous studies who proposed that individuals who are publicly self-conscious direct their behaviour towards impression management and self-presentation (Bloch & Richins, 1992; Sharp et al., 2011; Workman & Lee, 2011). Similarly, materialism was found to improve product evaluations where individuals who are materialistic acted more favourably towards the product, arising from materialists increased concern for the communication of appearance and achievement (Froh et al., 2011; O'Cass, 2001; Wiedmann et al., 2011). Additionally, results of the present study go beyond previous findings in that individuals who experience social anxiety are more concerned with presentation of appearance than achievement related facets of the self. Moreover, individual differences in social comparison were found to produce similar results insofar as individuals who showed little concern in examining the capabilities and opinions of others placed more emphasis on appearance related evaluations of a product.

6.5 RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

The findings of the present research provide numerous managerial and theoretical implications and contributions, which are respectively presented and discussed in the sections which follow.

6.5.1 Managerial Implications

Firstly, this research aimed to provide further insight into how consumers respond to induced social comparison and vanity appeals in advertising messages. Though this research was only able to determine the effect of vanity appeals in product evaluation and resulting purchase consideration, it still shed light on how imposed social comparison targets are perceived by consumers and the resulting impact on self-esteem. Marketers need to be aware

that vanity appeals impact on the way that product are evaluated. Specifically, vanity appeals evoke product evaluations where vanity induced product benefits and qualities are most salient. This reinforces the idea that consumer vanity is of important interest to marketers arising from the influence of vanity on purchase behaviour (Durvasula et al., 2001). Essentially, vanity appeals enable marketers to establish some degree of control over the evaluative criteria used by consumers, by providing circumstances that increase the saliency of particular expressive benefits of a product.

Though this research was unable to provide evidence that self-esteem arising from social comparison impacts on purchase consideration, there is reason to believe that social comparison induced by the use of attractive models in advertising messages still has important implications for purchase behaviour. Specifically, through the impact on self-esteem, social comparison creates circumstances in which individuals will seek congruence and compensation for negatively perceived discrepancies. If marketers use upward targets in their advertising messages they create a need within consumers to seek a means to compensate for discrepancies in their self-concept. Such means are believed to be material possessions which the consumer believes will act in communicating favourable images to others and thus, enhance their self-concept.

Additionally, this research highlights the importance of taking into consideration psychographic segments that engage in the aforementioned behaviour. Particularly, it is apparent that only those individuals who are high in public self-consciousness engage in self-presentational practices in order to influence and control the way in which they are perceived by others. In addition, the social anxiety that is considered to arise from self-consciousness (Fenigstein et al., 1975) influences which facets of the self will be most salient when consumers engage in self-presentational behaviour. Specifically, consumers who are high in social anxiety place more importance in controlling appearance aspects of the self. Therefore, marketers need to develop ways of targeting these specific segments of the market, and consider interpersonal differences when developing their advertising messages and marketing strategies for luxury fashion products.

6.5.2 Theoretical Implications and Contributions

Theoretically, this thesis made a contribution by synthesising consumer constructs and empirically testing the interrelationships that previous research had only discussed or alluded to

(e.g. Workman & Lee, 2011). Through the development of a conceptual model the present research brings together several underlying domains of the marketing, consumer behaviour and psychology literature. This research is the first to quantitatively explore the relationship between social comparison, vanity and self-consciousness and the resulting influence on purchase behaviour. In doing so, public self-consciousness was identified as an antecedent to self-presentational behaviour which is determined by situational circumstances arising from social comparison, the evaluative outcome of which is influenced by vanity.

Specifically, this research showed that only individuals who are regarded as high in public self-consciousness engage in self-presentational behaviour. This provided support for a range of literature that suggests that public self-consciousness causes individuals to express concern for creating favourable impressions and how they are perceived by others (Bloch & Richins, 1992; Schlenker & Leary, 1982; Workman & Lee, 2011). Furthermore, previous research indicated uncertainty regarding the role of public self-consciousness in relation to social comparison and vanity (Workman & Lee, 2011). Consequently, this study determined that public self-consciousness is in fact an antecedent to vanity and postulated that social comparison may also hold a subsequent position to public self-consciousness.

Furthermore, the present study takes the first step in linking the construct of consumer vanity with expressive motives in product evaluations. This research shows that appeals to vanity give rise to evaluative criteria that are congruent with the vanity appeal, which in turn results in a product evaluation that is congruent to the manipulated condition. Overall, vanity and the resulting evaluation were exceedingly effective in explaining variation in purchase consideration. Vanity-concern was also found to be fundamental in moderating the relationship between vanity and motive satisfaction, insofar as vanity-concern influenced individuals to engage in evaluations that would serve self-congruity.

Though this study was not the first to manipulate social comparison in an advertising context (Micu & Coulter, 2012), it is one of the first to examine the implications of experimentally manipulated self-esteem in a consumption context and to determine the relationships between dimensions of social comparison and self-esteem. Consequently, the research provides a theoretical foundation for further research into the relationship of social comparison and self-esteem on the vanity influenced product evaluation supported here.

6.6 RESEARCH LIMITATIONS

There are several limitations that need to be considered when interpreting the findings of the present research.

As the implications of advertising messages on purchase consideration are so vast, this research was only able to provide a limited investigation. Consequently, the findings should be interpreted for specific and intentional use of vanity appeals and induced social comparison in advertising, rather than for general advertising messages.

The unnatural environment in which the advertisements were presented provides the second limitation to this research. Specifically, the print ads were viewed online, isolated from any other media or advertising messages, which does not replicate the cluttered environment where print advertisements are usually presented. Furthermore, print advertisements usually have an unannounced presence and consumers are able refer back to advertisements if they wish. This was not the case for the present research as respondents were advised in advance that participation would involve exposure to advertising messages and the screen preceding exposure informed participants of the content and purpose of the advertisement, respondents were also prevented from referring back to previous pages within the online experiment. Consequently, this could have affected evaluation process and needs to be considered when interpreting the results.

The next limitation refers to the issue of self-selection bias in the sample, which is present in this research and limits the extent that results can be generalised. For this research, participants were recruited via Amazon's Mechanical Turk (Appendix 8.6.1). Therefore, there was a self-selection bias as the sample only consisted of respondents who actively participate in Mechanical Turk tasks. Though it cannot be assumed that the results are generalizable to the general population of women aged 18 to 35, Amazon's Mechanical Turk sample pool is considered to be diverse and representative of the population (Paolacci et al., 2010).

Finally, it needs to be considered that there are many external factors affecting respondents' perceptions of social comparison conditions, vanity appeals and the resulting evaluation process and purchase consideration. Taking Self-Consciousness and the other covariates into account enabled the effect of these variables to be considered and controlled for. However, there are other factors that could have influenced the results, such as individuals initial self-

esteem levels, inclination towards self-monitoring, and susceptibility to interpersonal influence, which need to be taken into account when results are interpreted.

6.7 FUTURE RESEARCH

From the findings presented in the previous chapter, a number of directions have been identified for future research. From a general consumer behaviour perspective, it is clear that more empirical studies are needed to shed light on the implications of consumer vanity in the product evaluation process. Further research can use the model presented in this research to test the effect of different vanity appeals in the evaluation of a product as satisfying expressive consumption motives. For the consumer vanity antecedent, further research is needed to test how the appearance and achievement components of consumer vanity translate into expressive motives; specifically, examining which specific product characteristics are most salient when vanity appeals made in advertising messages give rise to product evaluations corresponding to that appeal. Additionally, the development of a product evaluation measure that incorporates these salient characteristics would benefit from further attention from researchers.

The effects of the covariate variables were discussed in the previous sections. However, further research could provide more detail on the relationships between Self-Consciousness, Materialism, Social Comparison Orientation, and Vanity-Concern with the constructs in the model presented here. In particular, the effect of Vanity-Concern in relation to salience of vanity appeals and product characteristics would be of interest to future research, as Vanity-Concern led to stronger relationships between Vanity and Motive Satisfaction for the vanity dimension in question. Further research into the effect of Social Anxiety on Self-Esteem is also of key interest, as is the effect of Public Self-Consciousness.

Finally, this research provided reason to argue that Social Comparison and the resulting change to Self-Esteem were not significant in determining Purchase Consideration. However, the results this does not mean that these variables are not significant in affecting the presented model at other points in the evaluation process. As Social Comparison did have a significant negative impact on Self-Esteem, future research is needed to investigate how this fits with the final model presented here.

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CHAPTER 7 – REFERENCES

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8 APPENDICES

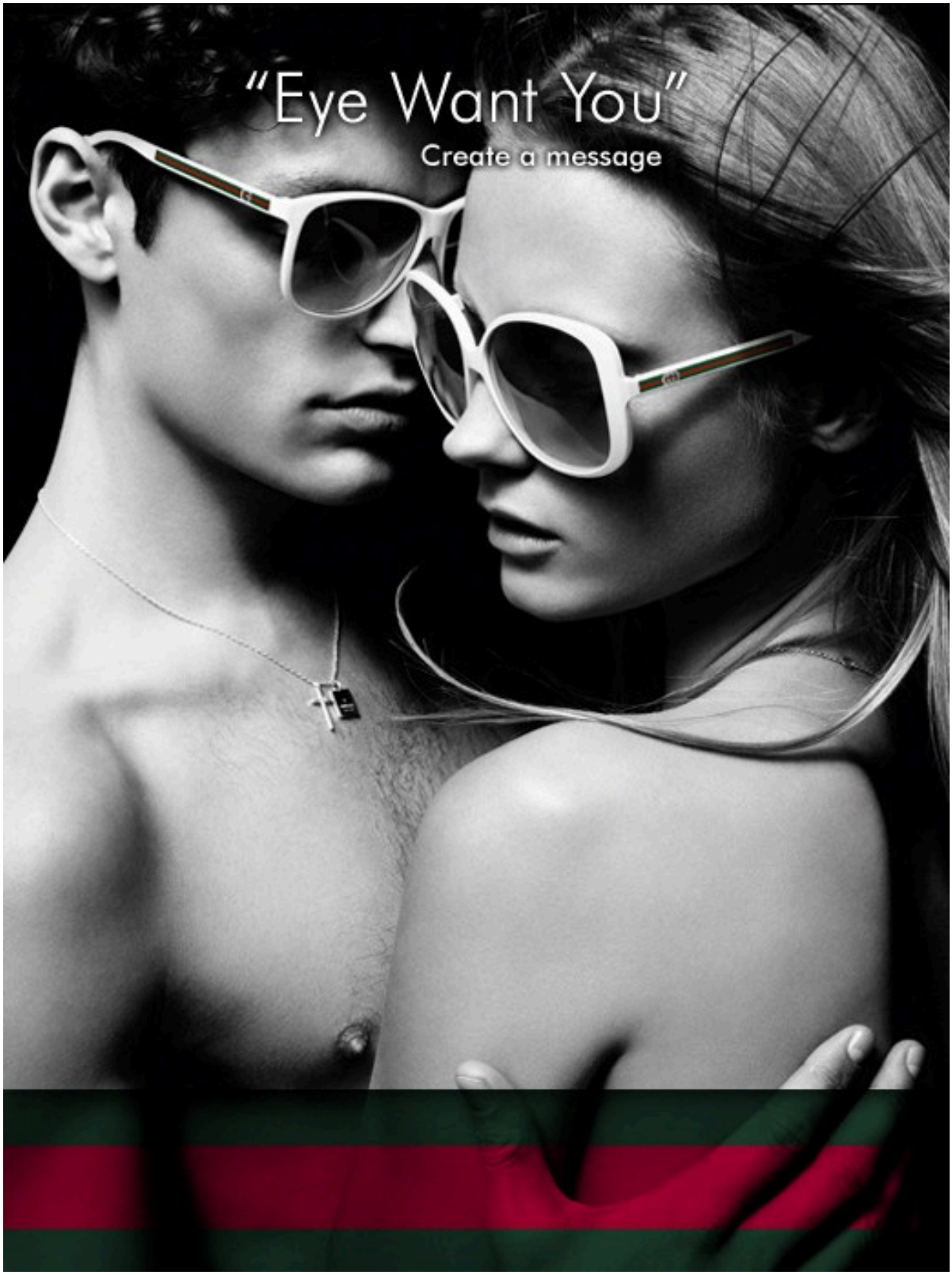
8.1 STIMULI DEVELOPMENT

8.1.1 Goyne Logo

GOYNE

8.1.2 Existing Advertisements

Source: Designer-Reading Glasses (2015)

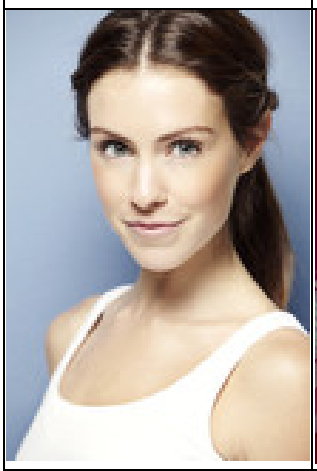
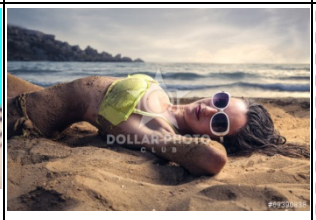
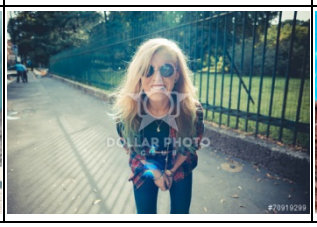
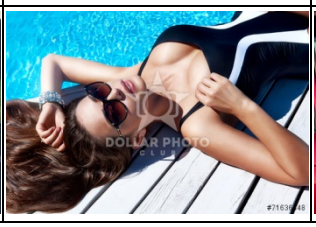


Source: (Bauknecht (2010)

8.2 PRE-STUDY ONE: PRELIMINARY IMAGE REDUCTION

8.2.1 Recruitment

8.2.2 Images

1	2	3	4
			
5	6	7	8
			
9	10	11	12
			
13	14	15	16
			
17	18	19	20
			

8.3 PRE-STUDY TWO: IMAGE AND COPY SELECTION

8.3.1 Information Sheet

Fashion Consumption Thesis Research
Information Sheet for Participants

You have been invited to participate as a subject in a research project investigating motives for fashion products. The aim of this project is to determine how participants evaluate a number of models relative to themselves. Additionally, this project also aims to determine how well participants feel different short sections of text reflect certain attributes about a product.

Your involvement in this research will be to participate in an online survey which should take approximately **5 to 10 minutes**. Questions will include some basic demographics, as well as questions related to your views of the models and taglines.

By participating in this research, you may enter into a prize draw to **win one of three $50** Westfield vouchers.

The questionnaire will involve viewing a series of photographs, reading advertising tag lines, and answering questions.

Your name and identity will not accompany your survey response. At the end of the questionnaire you will be asked for your email address should you wish to enter the prize draw. Any information provided will be kept confidential and will only be used for reasons mentioned.

You have the right to withdraw from the study at any time during the progression of the questionnaire including the withdrawal of any information provided. However, once the survey is completed and submitted by you, withdrawal becomes impossible and information provided will be included in the study. Any uncompleted surveys will be discarded.

The results of this survey will be stored on the University of Canterbury servers for five years. Results of this study may be published. However, you may be assured of the complete confidentiality of all data collected and the identity of all participants will remain anonymous.

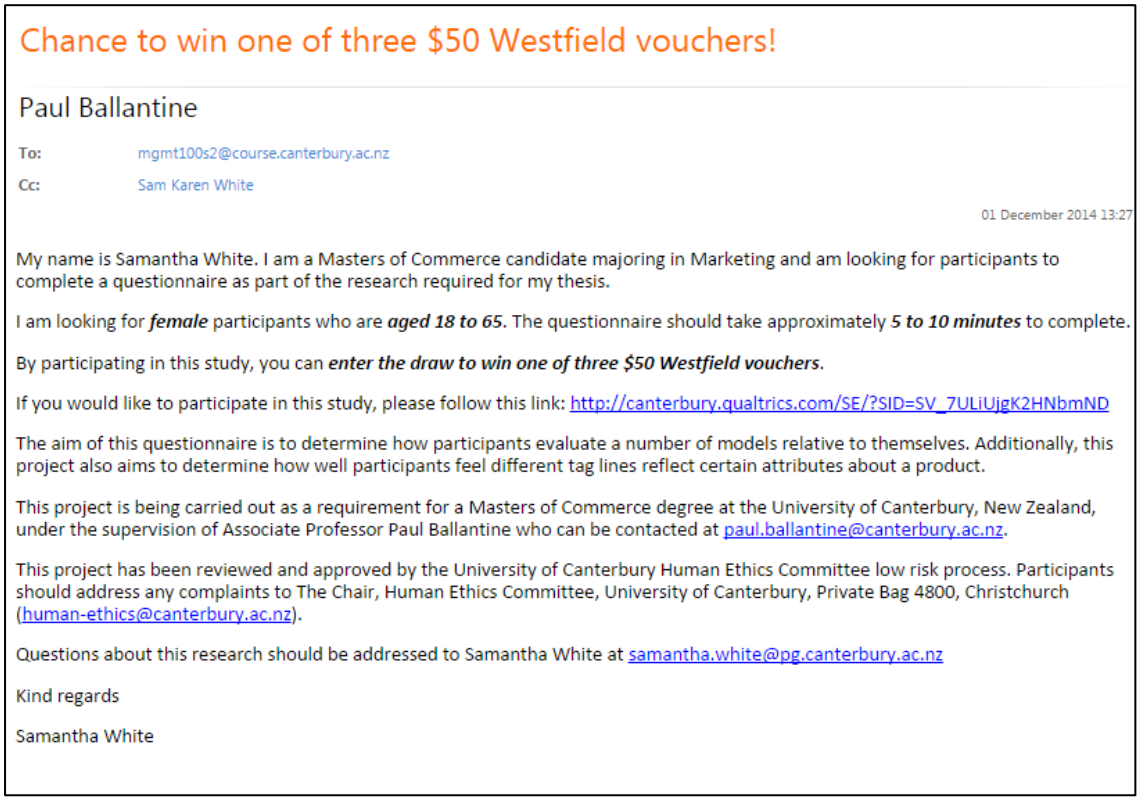
This project is being carried out as a requirement for a Masters of Commerce degree at the University of Canterbury, New Zealand, under the supervision of Associate Professor Paul Ballantine who can be contacted at paul.ballantine@canterbury.ac.nz.

This project has been reviewed and approved by the University of Canterbury Human Ethics Committee low risk process. Participants should address any complaints to The Chair, Human Ethics Committee, University of Canterbury, Private Bag 4800, Christchurch (human-ethics@canterbury.ac.nz).

If you agree to participate in this study, please continue to the next page where you will be asked to consent to research participation before continuing.

Samantha White
Masters of Commerce Candidate in Marketing
Department of Management, Marketing and Entrepreneurship
University of Canterbury
Email: samantha.white@pg.canterbury.ac.nz

8.3.2 Recruitment



Chance to win one of three $50 Westfield vouchers!

Paul Ballantine

To: mgmt100s2@course.canterbury.ac.nz

Cc: Sam Karen White

01 December 2014 13:27

My name is Samantha White. I am a Masters of Commerce candidate majoring in Marketing and am looking for participants to complete a questionnaire as part of the research required for my thesis.

I am looking for ***female*** participants who are ***aged 18 to 65***. The questionnaire should take approximately ***5 to 10 minutes*** to complete.

By participating in this study, you can ***enter the draw to win one of three $50 Westfield vouchers***.

If you would like to participate in this study, please follow this link: http://canterbury.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_7ULiUjgK2HNbmND

The aim of this questionnaire is to determine how participants evaluate a number of models relative to themselves. Additionally, this project also aims to determine how well participants feel different tag lines reflect certain attributes about a product.

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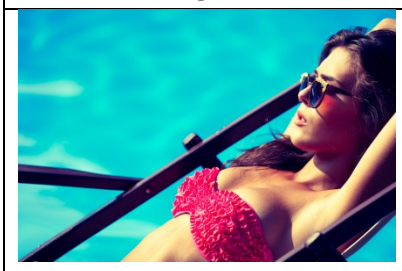
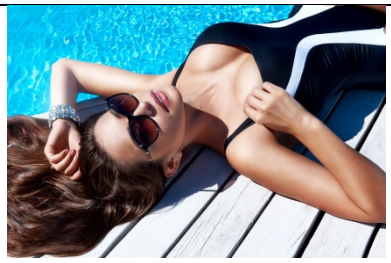
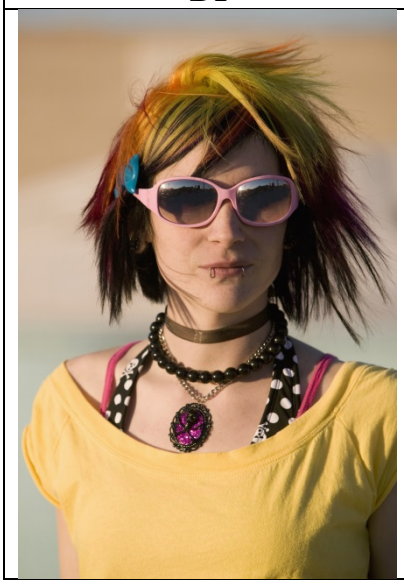
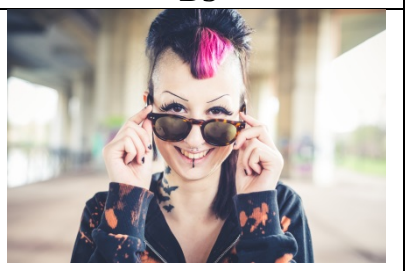
Questions about this research should be addressed to Samantha White at samantha.white@pg.canterbury.ac.nz

Kind regards

Samantha White

8.3.3 Images

Upward		
U1	U2	U3
		
Lateral		
L1	L2	L3
		
Downward		
D1	D2	D3
		

8.4 PRE-TEST

8.4.1 Information Sheet

Fashion Consumption Thesis Research
Information Sheet for Participants

You have been invited to participate as a subject in a research project investigating motives for fashion products. The aim of this project is to determine how different combinations of visual and written components can affect purchase intention for fashion products.

Your involvement in this research will be to participate in an online survey which should take approximately **10 to 15 minutes**. Questions will include some basic demographics, as well as questions related to your views of the advertisement content and yourself.

By participating in this research, you may enter into a prize draw to **win one of three $100** Westfield vouchers.

The questionnaire will involve viewing an advertisement and answering questions about the content.

Your name and identity will not accompany your survey response. At the end of the questionnaire you will be asked for your email address should you wish to enter the prize draw. Any information provided will be kept confidential and will only be used for reasons mentioned.

You have the right to withdraw from the survey at any time during the progression of the questionnaire including the withdrawal of any information provided. However, once the survey is completed and submitted by you, withdrawal becomes impossible and information provided will be included in the study. Any uncompleted surveys will be discarded.

The results of this survey will be stored on the University of Canterbury servers for five years. Results of this study may be published. However, you may be assured of the complete confidentiality of all data collected and the identity of all participants will remain anonymous.

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If you agree to participate in this study, please continue to the next page where you will be asked to consent to research participation before continuing.

Samantha White
Masters of Commerce Candidate in Marketing
Department of Management, Marketing and Entrepreneurship
University of Canterbury
Email: samantha.white@pg.canterbury.ac.nz

8.4.2 Recruitment

Chance to win one of three $100 Westfield vouchers!

Paul Ballantine

To: hsrv103s2@course.canterbury.ac.nz

Cc: Sam Karen White

16 December 2014 11:46

My name is Samantha White. I am a Masters of Commerce candidate majoring in Marketing and am looking for participants to complete a questionnaire as part of the research require for my thesis.

I am looking for ***female*** participants who are ***aged 18 to 35***. Questionnaire should take approximately ***10 to 15 minutes*** to complete.

By participating in this study, you can ***enter the draw to win one of three $100 Westfield vouchers***.

If you would like to participate in this study, please follow this link: http://canterbury.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_0dixbHnrzrbW7m5

The aim of this questionnaire is to determine how different combinations of visual and written components in an advertisement affect purchase intention for fashion products.

This project is being carried out as a requirement for a Masters of Commerce degree at the University of Canterbury, New Zealand, under the supervision of Associate Professor Paul Ballantine who can be contacted at paul.ballantine@canterbury.ac.nz.

This project has been reviewed and approved by the University of Canterbury Human Ethics Committee low risk process. Participants should address any complaints to The Chair, Human Ethics Committee, University of Canterbury, Private Bag 4800, Christchurch (human-ethics@canterbury.ac.nz).

Questions about this research should be addressed to Samantha White at samantha.white@pg.canterbury.ac.nz

Kind regards

Samantha White

8.5 FINAL STIMULI

8.5.1 Upward/Achievement

8.5.2 Lateral/Achievement

8.5.3 Downward/Achievement

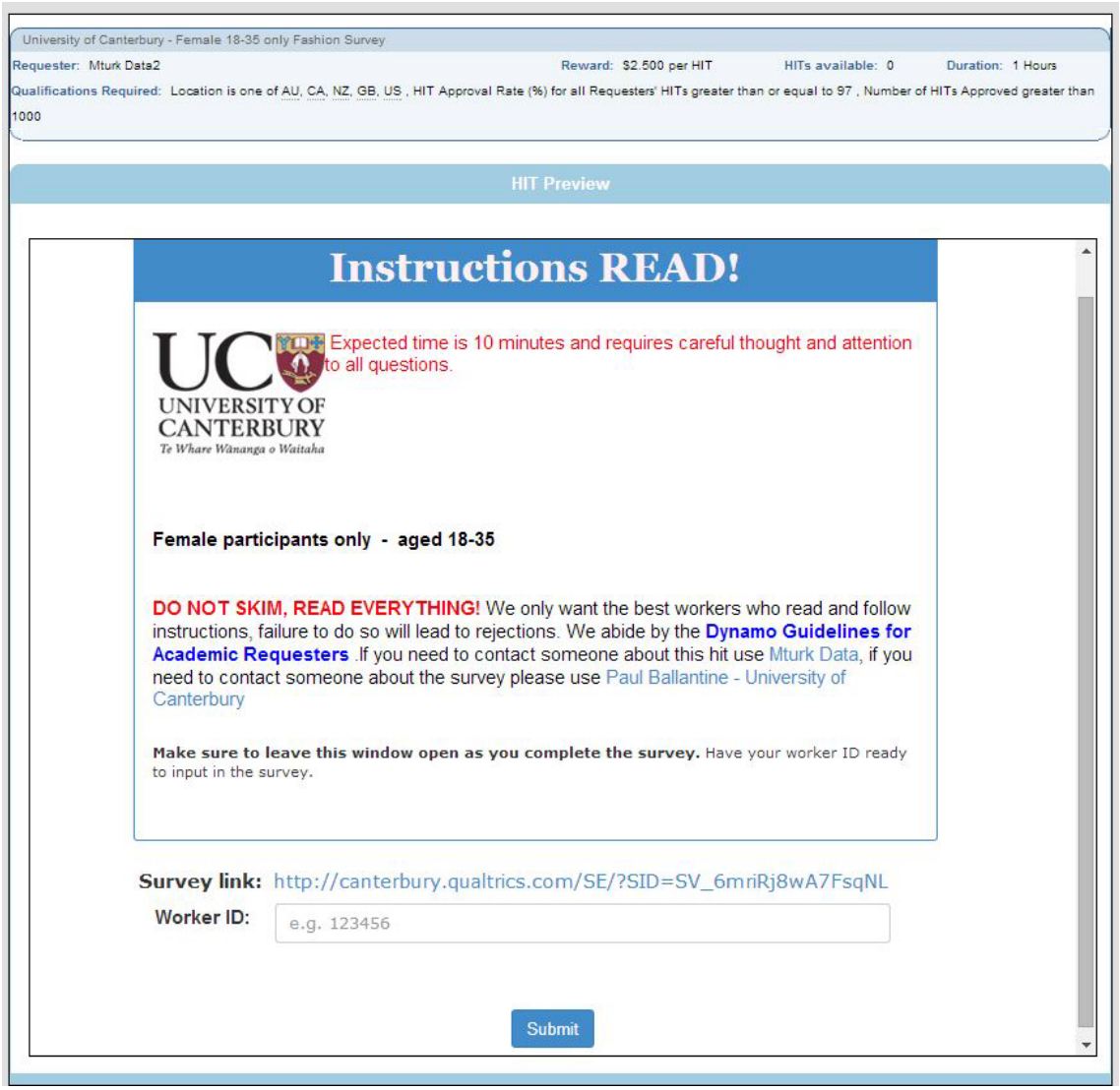
8.5.4 Upward/Appearance

8.5.5 Lateral/Appearance

8.5.6 Downward/Appearance

8.6 FINAL QUESTIONNAIRE

8.6.1 Mechanical Turk Recruitment



8.6.2 Section One – Information and Consent

Fashion Consumption Thesis Research
Information Sheet for Participants

You have been invited to participate as a subject in a research project investigating motives for fashion products. The aim of this project is to determine how different combinations of visual and written components can affect purchase intention for fashion products.

Your involvement in this research will be to participate in an online survey which should take approximately **10 to 15 minutes**. Questions will include some basic demographics, as well as questions related to your views of the advertisement content and yourself.

At completion of this survey you will be asked to provide your Mechanical Turk worker ID which will be used for distributing payment.

The questionnaire will involve viewing an advertisement and answering questions about the content.

Your name and identity will not accompany your survey response. Any personal information provided (such as worker ID) will be solely used for reasons mentioned. You have the right to withdraw from the survey at any time during the progression of the questionnaire including the withdrawal of any information provided. However, once the survey is completed and submitted by you, withdrawal becomes impossible and information provided will be included in the study. Any uncompleted surveys will be discarded.

The results of this survey will be stored on the University of Canterbury servers for five years. Results of this study may be published. However, you may be assured of the complete confidentiality of all data collected and the identity of all participants will remain anonymous.

This project is being carried out as a requirement for a Masters of Commerce degree at the University of Canterbury, New Zealand, under the supervision of Associate Professor Paul Ballantine who can be contacted at paul.ballantine@canterbury.ac.nz.

This project has been reviewed and approved by the University of Canterbury Human Ethics Committee low risk process. Participants should address any complaints to The Chair, Human Ethics Committee, University of Canterbury, Private Bag 4800, Christchurch (human-ethics@canterbury.ac.nz).

If you agree to participate in this study, please continue to the next page where you will be asked to consent to research participation before continuing.

Samantha White
Masters of Commerce Candidate in Marketing
Department of Management, Marketing and Entrepreneurship
University of Canterbury
Email: samantha.white@pg.canterbury.ac.nz

UNIVERSITY OF CANTERBURY
Te Whare Wānanga o Waitaha
CHRISTCHURCH NEW ZEALAND

Fashion Consumption Thesis Research
Consent Form for Participants

By selecting 'yes' below, you confirm the following:

- You have read and understood the description of the above-named project in the Information Sheet provided.
- On this basis, you agree to participate as a subject in this project, and consent to the publication of the results of this project with the understanding that your confidentiality will be preserved.
- You understand also that you may withdraw from this project at any time before survey completion

○ Yes, I confirm the above statements and would like to participate in this survey

○ No, thanks

This study requires ***female*** participants, aged ***18 to 35***.

Do you fit the above requirements?

○ Yes I am a female, 18 to 35 years of age

○ No

8.6.3 Section Two – Stimuli Exposure

UNIVERSITY OF CANTERBURY
Te Whare Wānanga o Waitaha
CHRISTCHURCH NEW ZEALAND

Thank you for taking part in this study.

On the next page is an advertisement for a pair of ***sunglasses*** from a new up and coming, high fashion label '***Goyne***'.

Take your time to consider the advertisement before continuing on to the following questions.

Please press NEXT to proceed with the questionnaire.

Advertisement

8.6.4 Section Three – Self-Consciousness, Independent and Dependent Measures

Read and consider the following statements and indicate your level of agreement with each

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I reflect about myself a lot	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I'm always trying to figure myself out	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I'm alert to changes in my mood	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I never scrutinise myself	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I'm often the subject of my own fantasies	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Generally, I'm not very aware of myself	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I'm constantly examining my motives	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I'm generally attentive to my inner feelings	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I'm aware of the way my mind works when I work through a problem	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
It takes me time to overcome my shyness in new situations	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I get embarrassed very easily	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I have trouble working when someone is watching me	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
If you are reading this please select strongly agree	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Large groups make me nervous	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I feel anxious when I speak in front of a group	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I'm concerned about my style of doing things	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I'm usually aware of my appearance	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
One of the last things I do before I leave my house is look in the mirror	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I'm concerned about the way I look	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I'm concerned about what other people think of me	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I usually worry about making a good impression	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Advertisement (Reminder)

Recall the advertisement for ***Goyne sunglasses***.

With regards to the ***model*** in the advertisement, indicate how you think she ***compares with yourself***

Weaker	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	Stronger
Less Confident	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	More Confident
Less Likeable	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	More Likeable
Different	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	Same
Less Desirable	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	More Desirable
Less Competent	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	More Competent
Less Attractive	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	More Attractive
Excluded	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	Included
Less Talented	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	More Talented
Less Accepted	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	More Accepted
Inferior	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	Superior

Recall the advertisement for ***Goyne sunglasses***.

With the tagline in mind, consider each of the following statements and indicate your level of agreement with each

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
This tagline suggests tha the product would show that I am an accomplished person	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
This tagline suggests that the product would show that my body is sexually appealing	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
This tagline suggests that the product would show that I am a very good looking individual	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
This tagline suggests that the product would show that in a professional sense, I am a very successful person	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
This taglinesuggests that the product would show that I am a good example of professional success	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
This tagline suggests that the product would show that I have the type of body that people want to look at	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
This tagline suggests that the product would make people notice how attractive I am	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
This tagline suggests that the product would make my looks very appealing to others	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
This tagline suggests that the product would make people envious of my good looks	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Read and consider the following statements and indicate your level of agreement with each

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I feel that I have less scholastic ability right now than others	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I am worried about what other people think of me	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I am dissatisfied with my weight	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I feel displeased with myself	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I feel like I'm not doing well	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I feel as smart as others	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I feel self-conscious	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I feel that others respect and admire me	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I feel inferior to others at this moment	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I feel concerned about the impression I am making	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I am pleased with my appearance right now	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I feel that I am having trouble understanding things that I read	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I am worried about whether I am regarded as a success or failure	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I feel unattractive	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I feel good about myself	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I feel confident about my abilities	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I feel satisfied with the way my body looks right now	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Recall the advertisement for ***Goyne sunglasses***.

With regards to the ***product*** in the advertisement, consider the following statements and indicate your level of agreement with each

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
This product is a symbol of professional success	○	○	○	○	○
People who buy this product are interested in status	○	○	○	○	○
This product indicates my achievements	○	○	○	○	○
This product would be noticed by others	○	○	○	○	○
I want to be seen using this product	○	○	○	○	○
The status this product provides is important to me	○	○	○	○	○
This product is a symbol of prestige	○	○	○	○	○
This product would help me gain popularity	○	○	○	○	○
This product would help me gain respect	○	○	○	○	○
This product lets people know who I am	○	○	○	○	○
This products status enhances my image	○	○	○	○	○
This product is best used in the presence of others	○	○	○	○	○

Recall the advertisement for ***Goyne sunglasses***.

With regards to the ***product*** in the advertisement, consider the following statements and indicate your level of agreement with each

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
This product would make a good impression on other people	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I think it is particularly appropriate to use this product in social contexts	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
This product would help me feel trendy/up-to-date	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
This product would help improve the way I am perceived	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Recall the advertisement for ***Goyne sunglasses***.

With regards to the ***product*** in the advertisement, consider the following statements and indicate your level of agreement with each

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I would purchase this product in order to create a style that is all my own	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
This product would tell people that I am different	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
This product would add to my personal identity	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
This product is original	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
This product would develop my personal uniqueness	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
This product would communicate my uniqueness	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
This product is interesting and unusual and will assist me in establishing a distinctive image	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
This product would express my individuality	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
This product would help create a personal image for myself that can't be duplicated	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I would purchase this product to create a more distinctive personal identity	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
This product would be used to shape my personal image	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

How likely is it that you would consider purchasing these ***Goyne sunglasses***?

Likely	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	Unlikely
Possible	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	Impossible
Certain	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	Uncertain
Probably	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	Improbably

8.6.5 Section Four – Additional Covariate Measures

Consider the following statements and indicate your level of agreement with each

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I wouldn't be any happier if I owned nicer things	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
It sometimes bothers me quite a bit that I can't afford to buy all the things I'd like	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I have all the things I really need to enjoy life	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
My life would be better if I owned certain things I don't have	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I'd be happier if I could afford to buy more things	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I like to own things that impress people	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Some of the most important achievements in life include acquiring material possessions	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I don't place much emphasis on the amount of material objects people own as a sign of success	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I admire people who own expensive homes, cars, and clothes	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I don't pay much attention to the material objects other people own	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The things I own say a lot about how well I am going in life	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I like a lot of luxury in my life	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I try to keep my life simple as far as possessions are concerned	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I put less emphasis on material things than most people I know	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Buying things gives me a lot of pleasure	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I usually buy only the things I need	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
If you are reading this please select strongly agree	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The things I own aren't all that important to me	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I enjoy spending money on things that aren't practical	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Consider the following statements and indicate your level of agreement with each

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I don't often compare myself with others	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I often compare myself with others with respect to what I have accomplished in life	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I always like to know what others in a similar situation would do	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I always pay a lot of attention to how I do things compared with how others do things	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
If I want to find out how well I have done something, I compare what I have done with how others have done	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I often compare how I am doing socially (e.g. social skills, popularity) with other people	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I often try to find out what others think who face similar problems as I face	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I never consider my situation in life relative to that of other people	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I often like to talk with others about mutual opinions and experiences	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
If I want to learn more about something, I try to find out what others think about it	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Consider the following statements and indicate your level of agreement for each

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I am very concerned about my appearance	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Looking best is worth the effort	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I am more concerned with professional success than most people I know	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I would feel embarrassed if I was around people and did not look my best	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Achieving greater success than my peers is important to me	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
It is important that I always look good	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Professional achievements are an obsession with me	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The way I look is extremely important to me	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

8.6.6 Section Five – Demographics

Thank you for your participation so far. You are almost finished, there are just a few personal questions remaining.

Are you male or female?

- Male
- Female

What is your age?

- 17 or younger
- 18 to 25
- 26 to 30
- 31 to 35
- 36 to 40
- 41 to 45
- 46 to 50
- 51 to 55
- 56 to 60
- 61 to 65
- 66 or older

What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- Less than High School
- High School / GED
- Some College
- 2-year College Degree
- 4-year College Degree
- Masters Degree
- Doctoral Degree
- Professional Degree (JD, MD)

What is your ethnicity?

- White/Caucasian
- African American
- Hispanic
- Asian
- Native American
- Pacific Islander
- Other

What is your current relationship status?

- Single, never married
- Married (or de facto relationship)
- Divorced/Separated
- In a relationship (not living together)
- Widowed

What is your current employment status?

- Employed (Paid)
- Employed (Unpaid)
- Self-Employed
- Government
- Retired
- Unemployed
- Student
- Homemaker

What is your annual salary (including bonuses and commissions) in U.S. dollars?

- $0 - $25,000
- $25,001 - $50,000
- $50,001 - $75,000
- $75,001 - $100,000
- $100,001 - $125,000
- $125,001 - $150,000
- $150,001 - $175,000
- $175,001 - $200,000
- $200,001+

Please provide your worker ID by entering it in the field below.

8.6.7 Section Six – Finish and Debrief

Thank you for participating in this research, your time and effort is appreciated.

Due to the nature of this research, the true aim of this study could not be disclosed prior to participation for the risk of priming participants. The full purpose of this survey was to determine the impact a series of advertisements had on participants purchase consideration for the product being advertised.

These advertisements were constructed in such a way as to combine various levels of social comparison (by using models who were perceived as either inferior, superior, or equal to the targeted participant sample) with different types of vanity appeals (those that were achievement or appearance focused) to see which combinations resulted in the highest intention to purchase a product.

The advertisements used were constructed using a number of previous surveys in order to determine appropriate models and text, using a sample of participants similar to yourself.

You and other participants were each exposed to a single advertisement that was randomly allocated out of a pool of six different advertisements. As well as testing for social comparison, vanity and purchase consideration, participants levels of materialism, self-consciousness and other related variables were also measured to determine any other impacts on purchasing intention.

We thank you for your time spent taking this survey.
Your response has been recorded.

8.7 ETHICS APPROVAL

College of Business and Law
University of Canterbury
Private Bag 4800, Christchurch 8140

Assoc Prof Venkataraman Nilakant
Associate Dean of Commerce
Phone: +64 3 364 2987 Ext 8621
Email: ven.nilakant@canterbury.ac.nz

UNIVERSITY OF CANTERBURY
Te Whare Wānanga o Waitaha
CHRISTCHURCH NEW ZEALAND

Ref 650.13
Student ID: 56897871

28 July 2014

Samantha White
1/27 Devonport Lane
St Albans
CHRISTCHURCH 8014

Dear Samantha

Re: Application for Approval of Registration of Master's Research Proposal

I am pleased to confirm that your Master's Research Proposal '*Consumption Motives for Luxury Fashion Products*' has been approved and registered.

Please note the following critical dates:

▪ Start date	14 July 2014
▪ Date of registration of research proposal	28 July 2014
▪ First progress report due (and every six months thereafter)	14 November 2014
▪ Thesis submission deadline (**with** eligibility for Honours)	21 February 2015
▪ Thesis submission deadline (**without** eligibility for Honours)	21 February 2016

If your thesis has not been submitted by 21 February 2015, you will need to re-enrol which will incur additional fees. The final date for thesis submission deadline (**with** eligibility for Honours) is 21 August 2015. If you have any questions regarding any of these dates, please do not hesitate to contact me.

I hope that your research is progressing well.

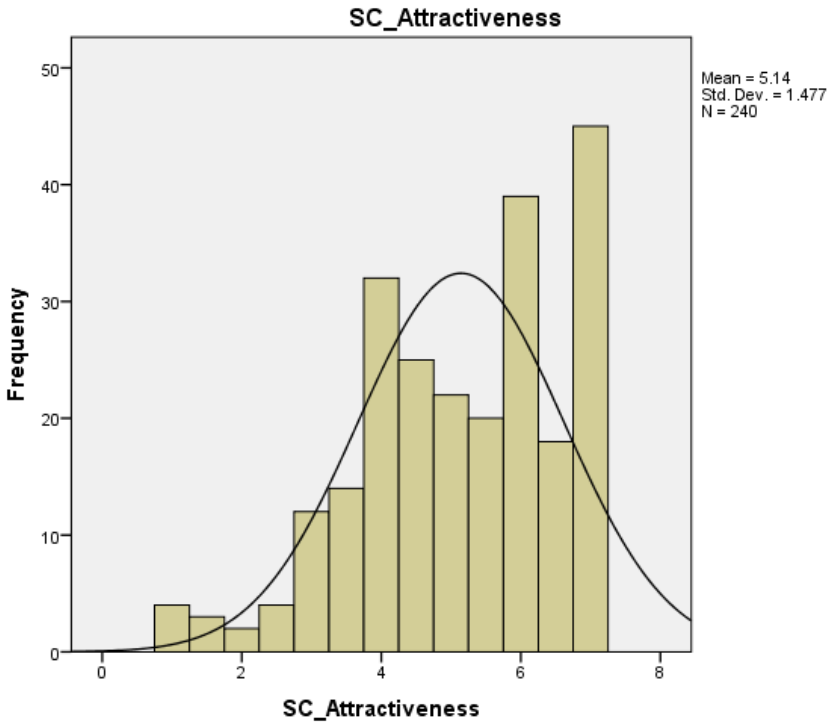
Yours sincerely

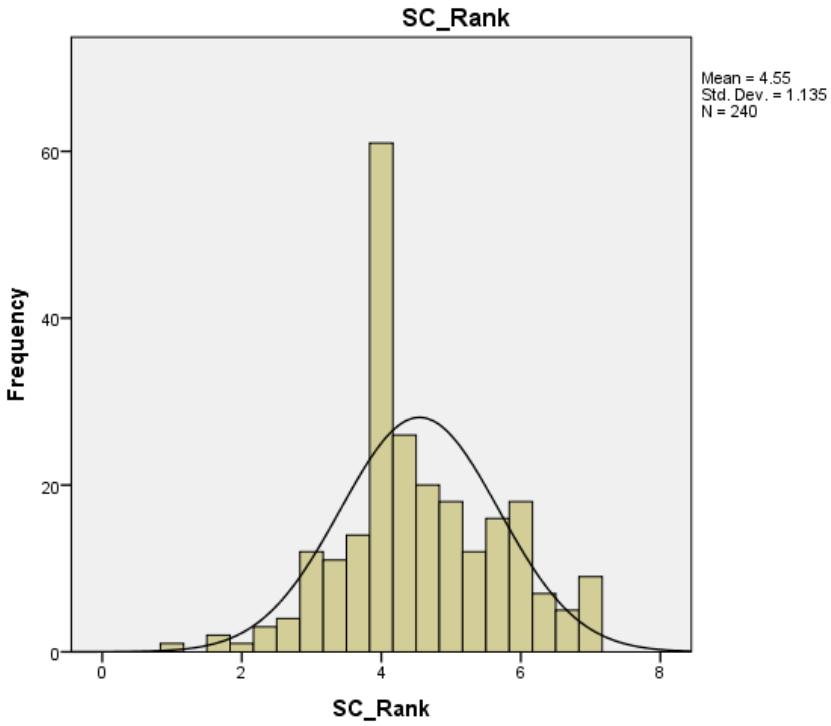
V. Nilakant

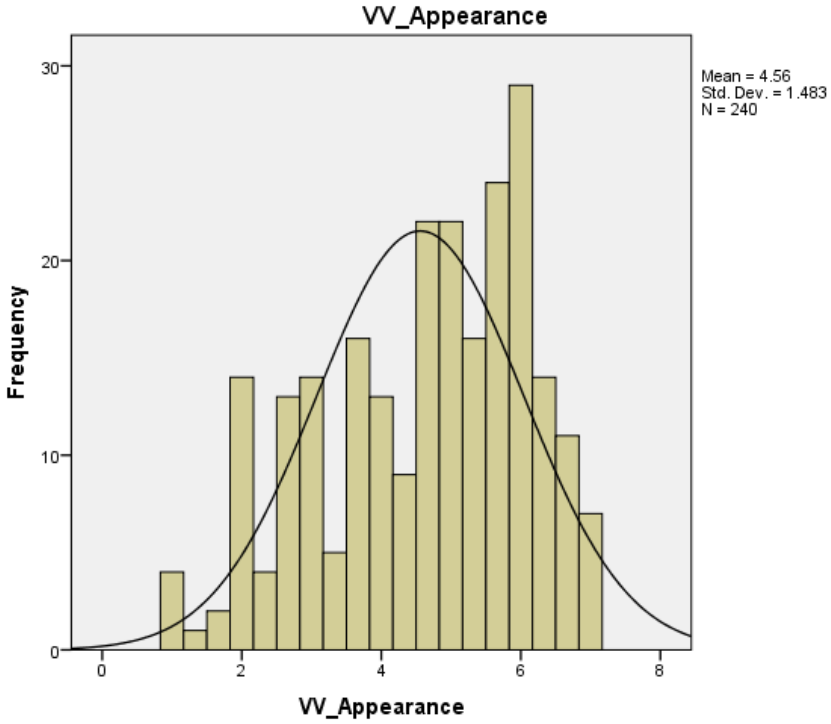
Venkataraman Nilakant
Associate Dean of Commerce
School of Business and Economics

cc: HOD MME and Senior Supervisor: Assoc Prof Paul Ballantine
Dept Administrator: Mrs Irene Edgar

8.8 HISTOGRAMS FOR INDEPENDENT, DEPENDENT AND COVARIATE VARIABLES



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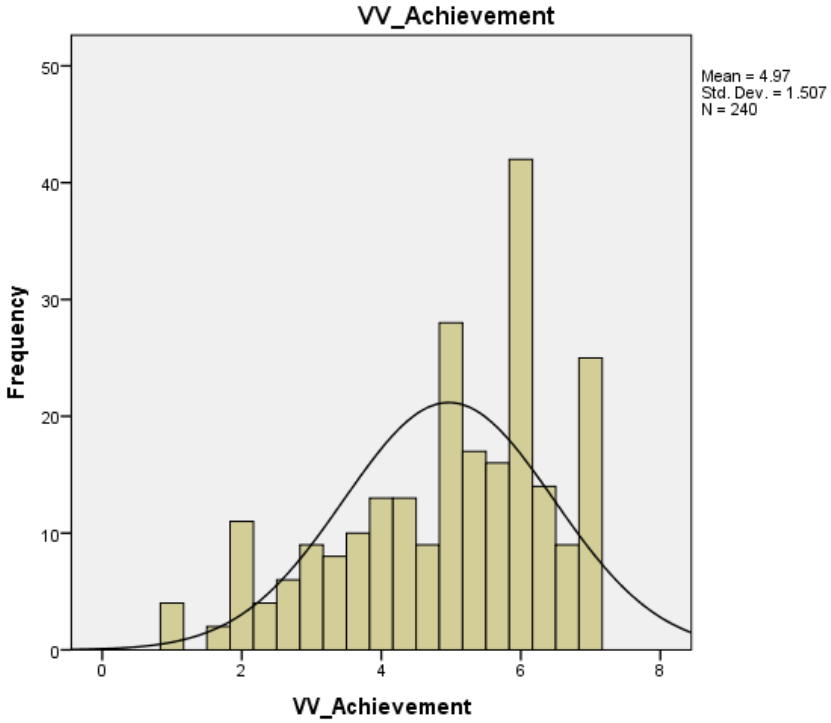
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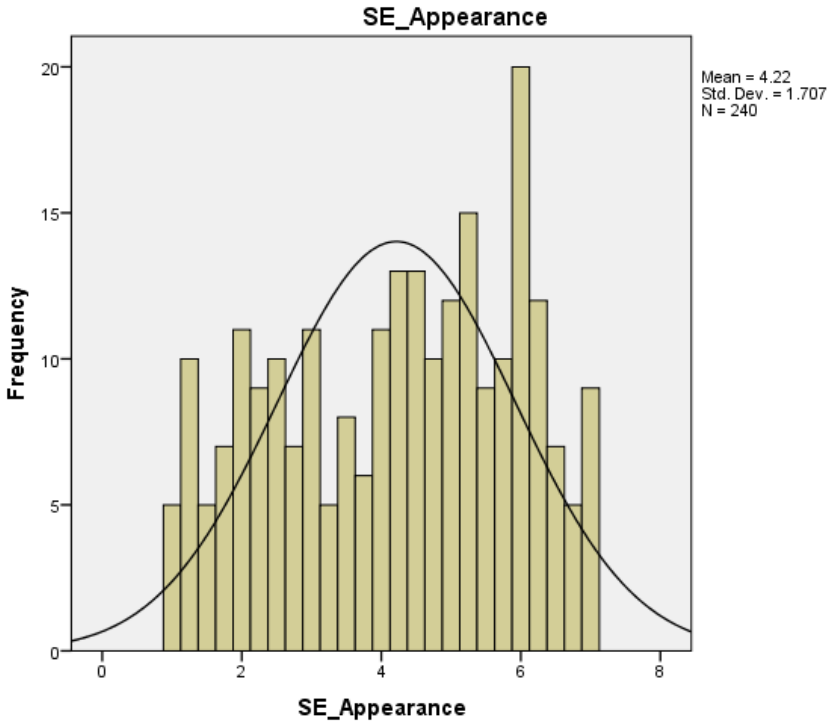
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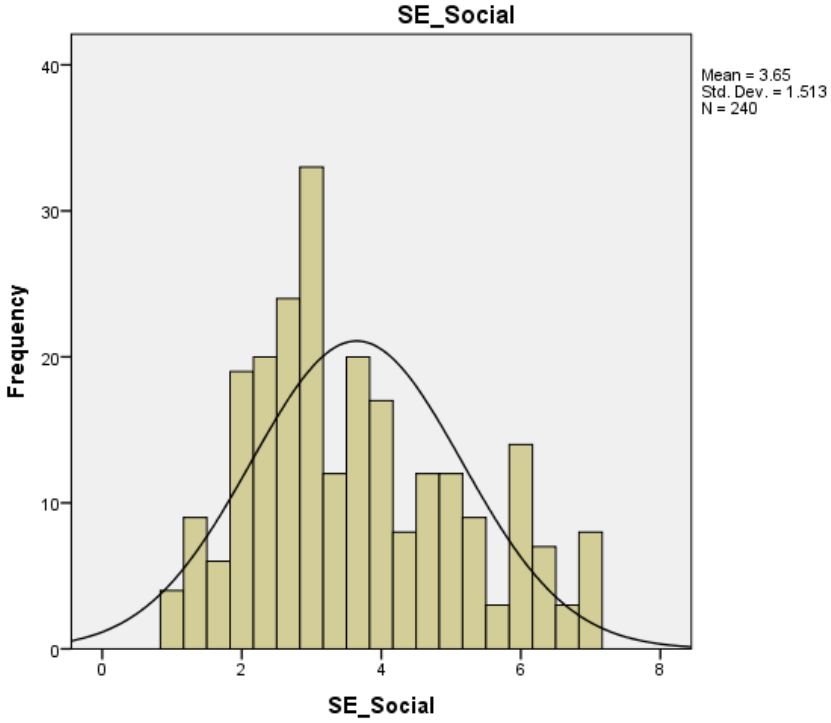
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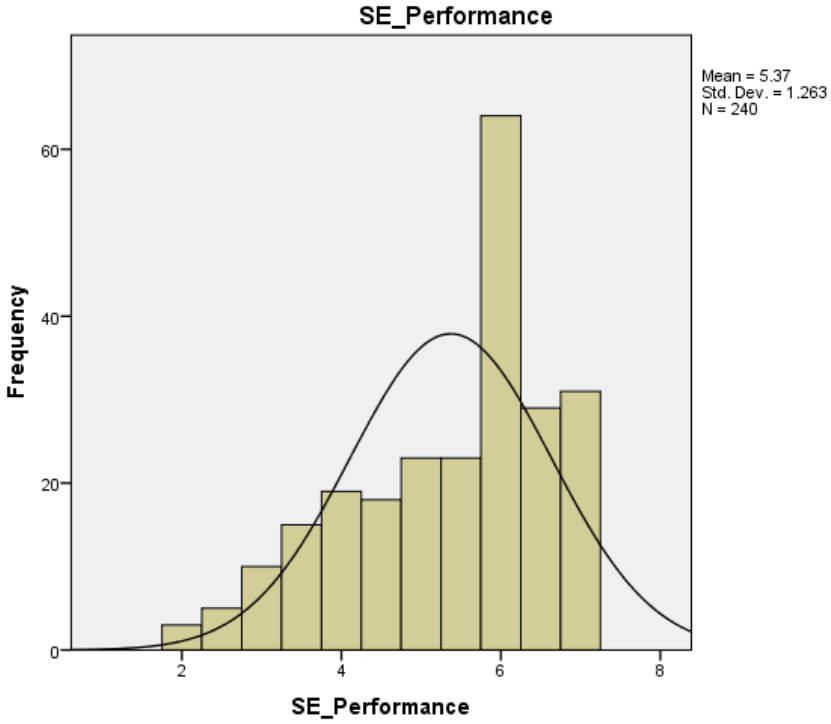
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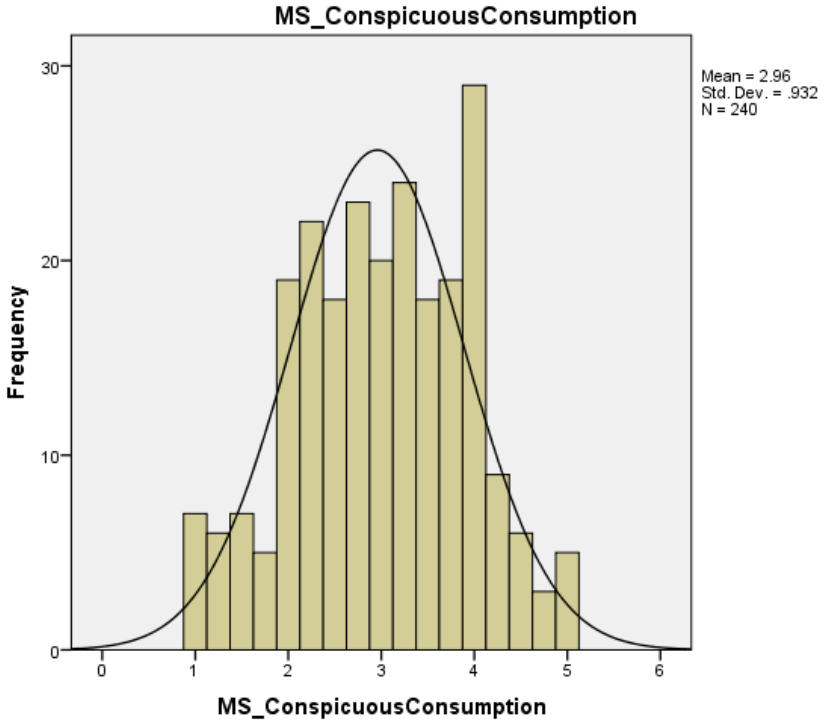
SE_Performance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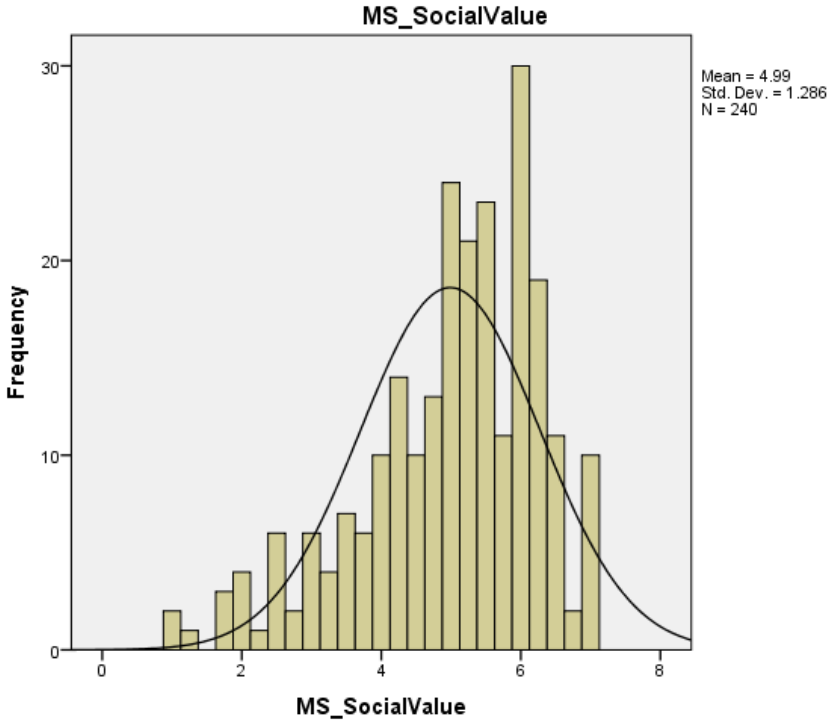
4
5
6
MS_ConspicuousConsumption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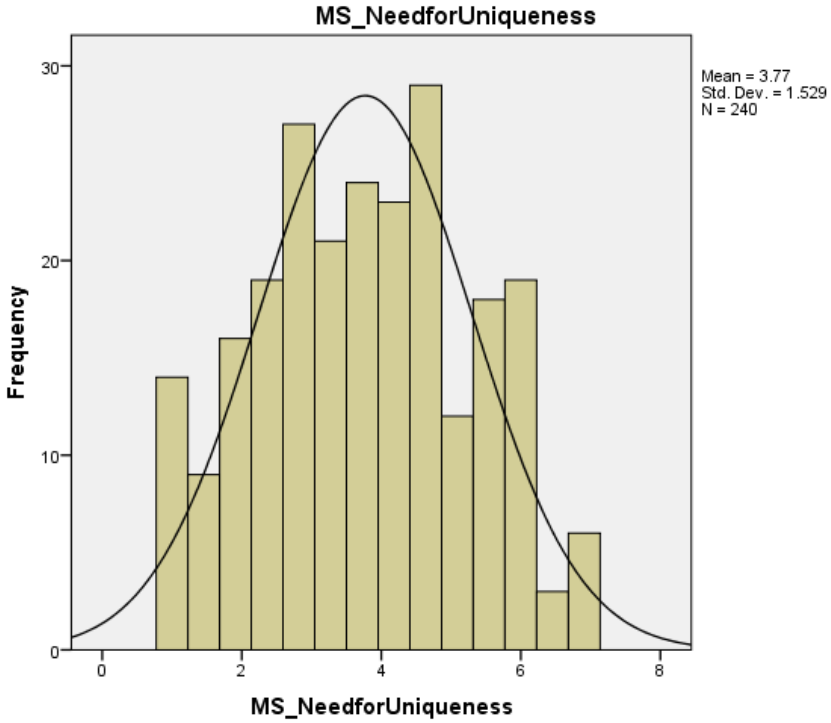
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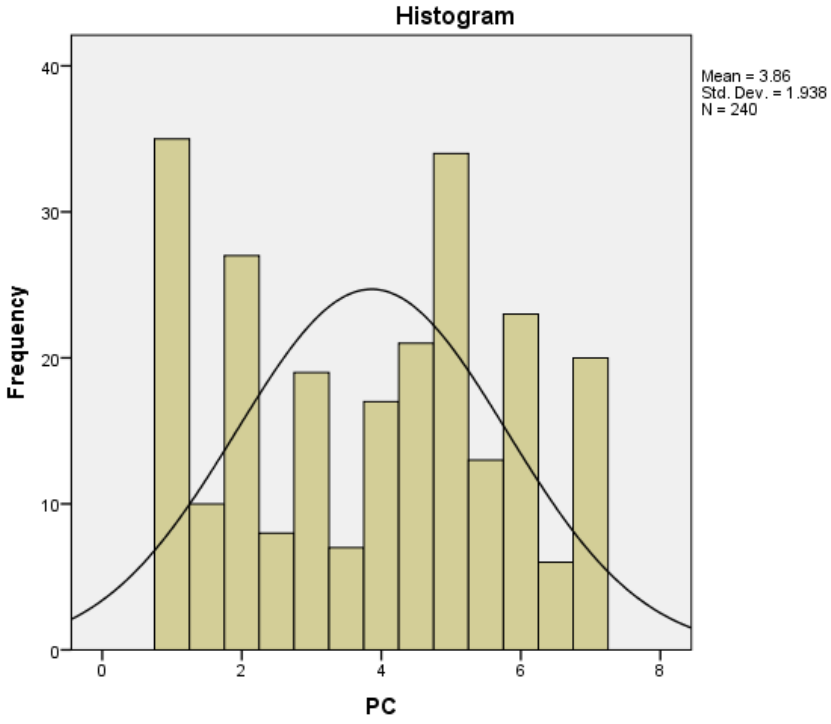
MS_NeedforUniqueness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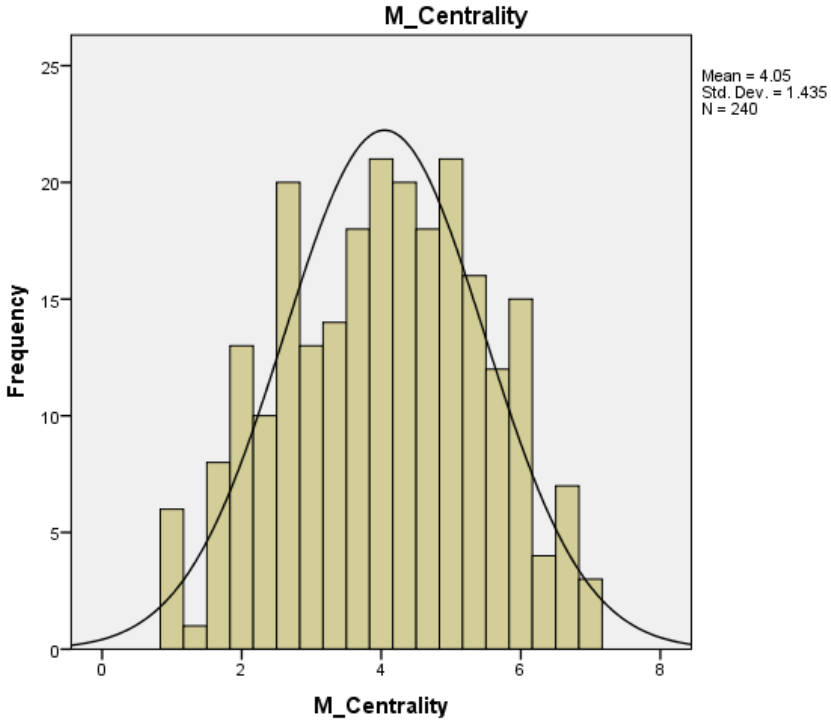
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4
6
8


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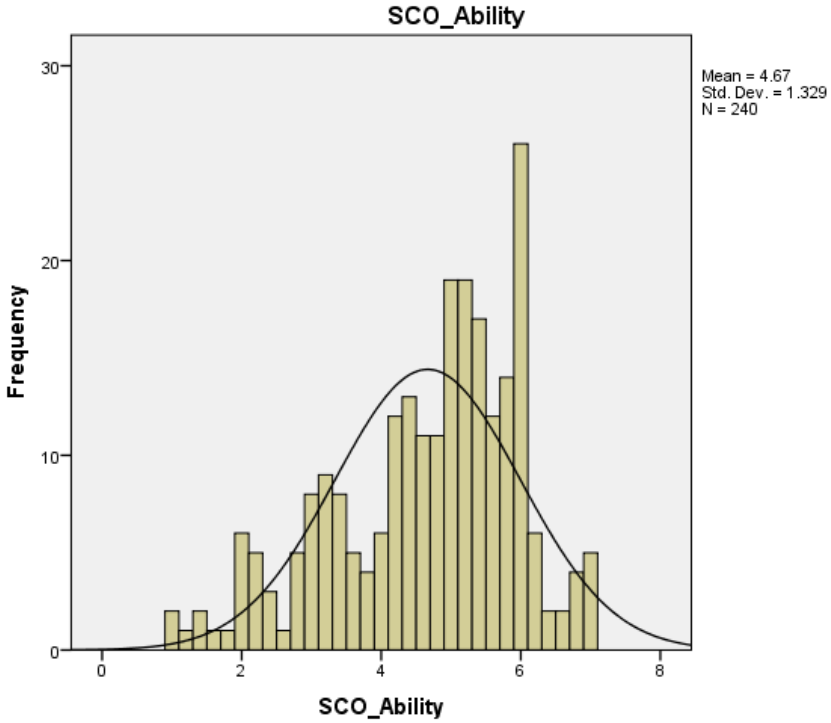
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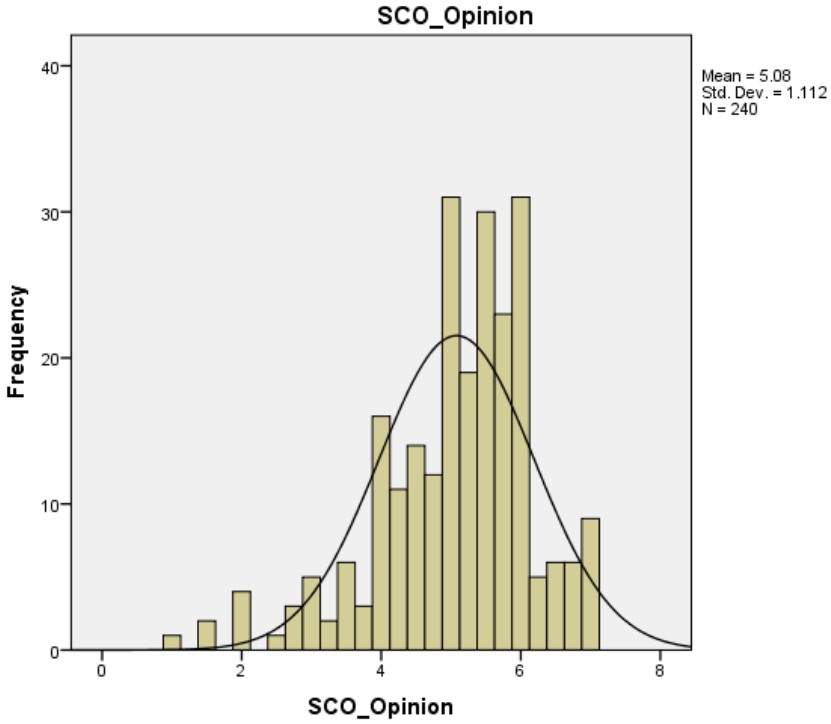
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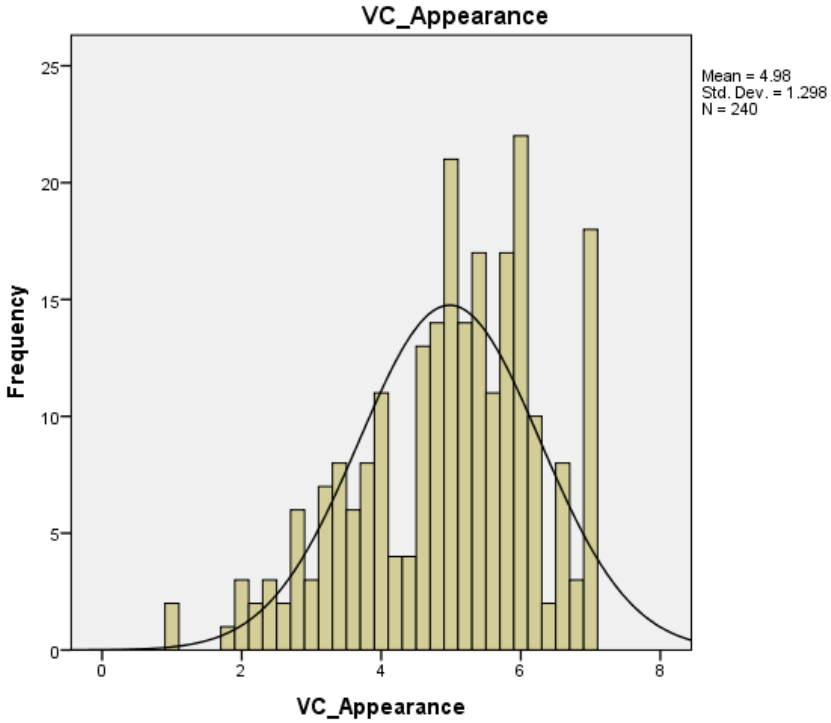
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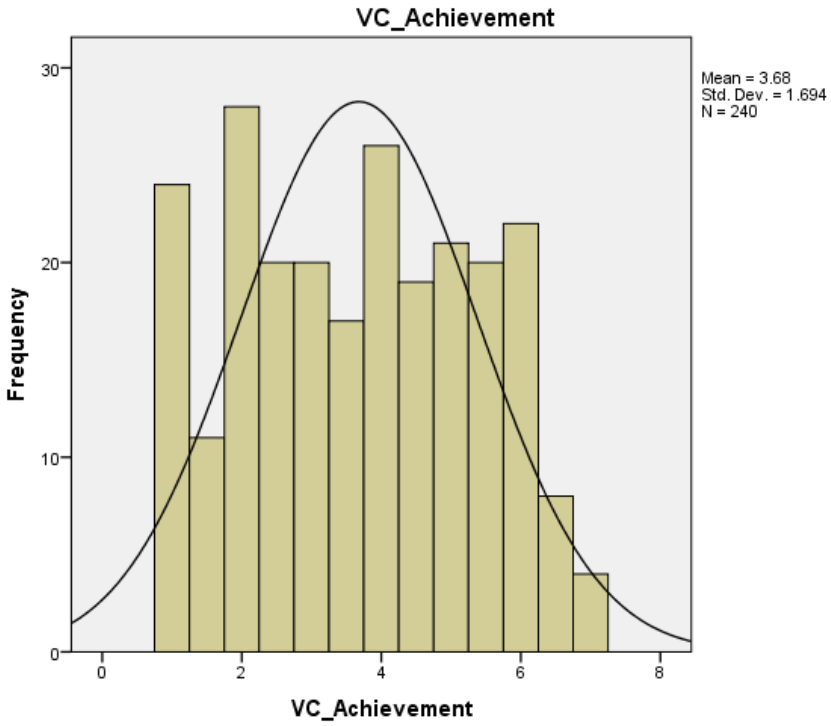
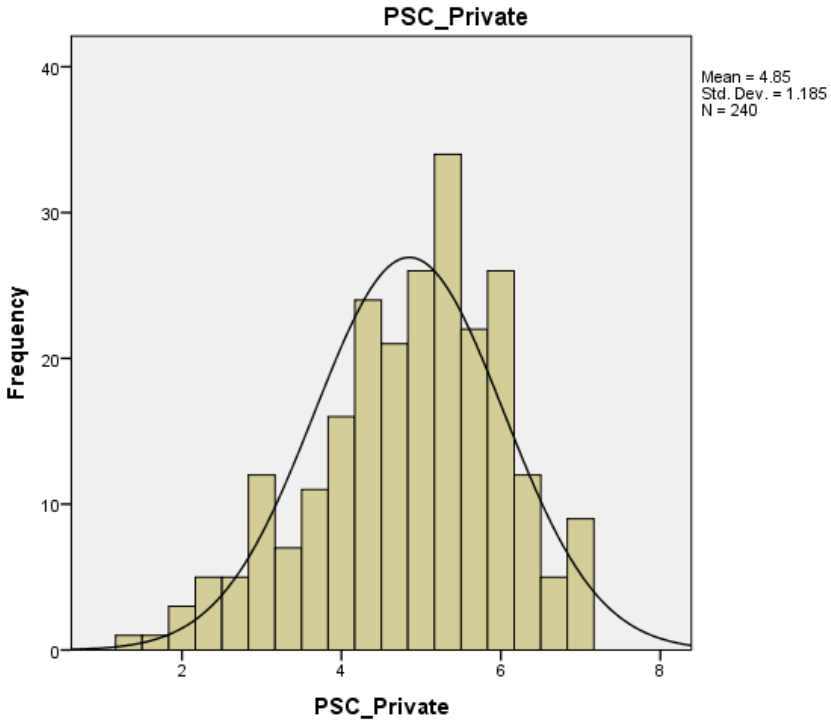
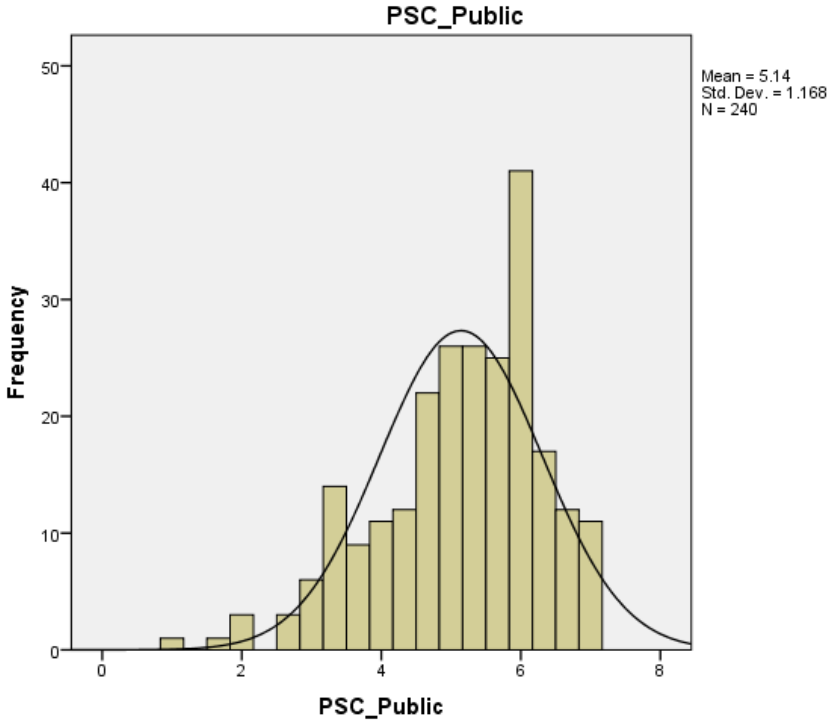
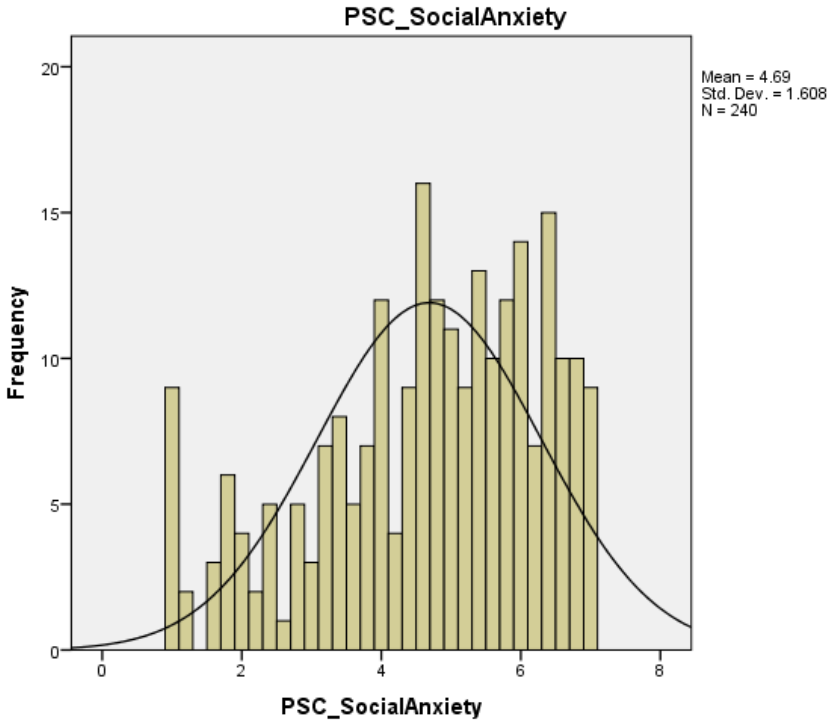
Frequency
VC_Appearance


VC_Achievement
Mean = 3.68
Std. Dev. = 1.694
N = 240
Frequency
VC_Achievement


PSC_Private
Mean = 4.85
Std. Dev. = 1.185
N = 240
Frequency
PSC_Private

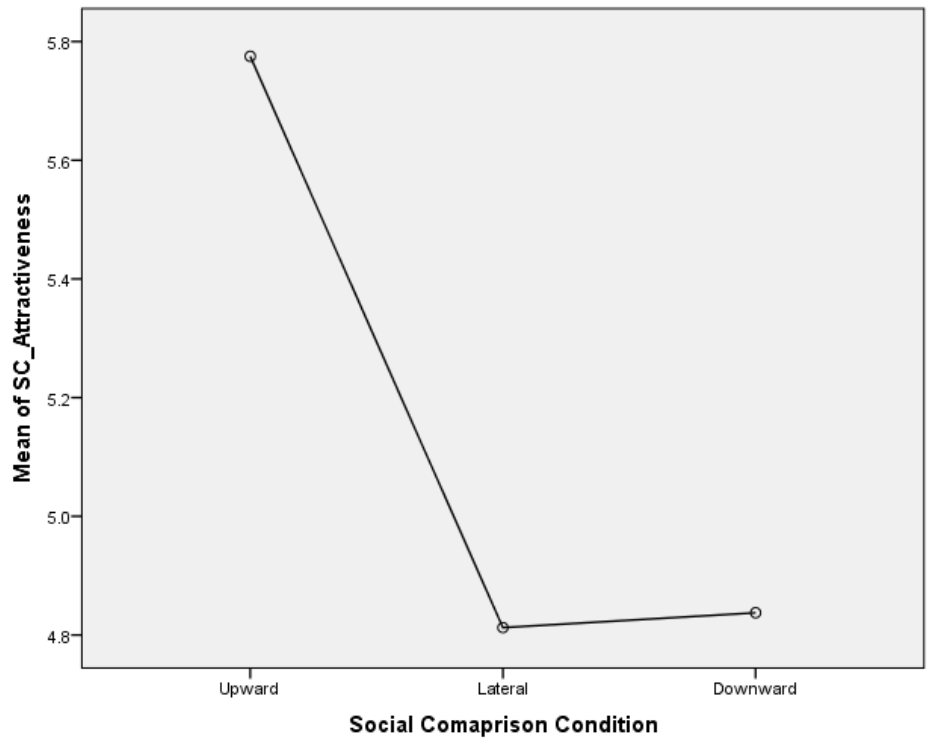

PSC_Public
Mean = 5.14
Std. Dev. = 1.168
N = 240
Frequency
PSC_Public

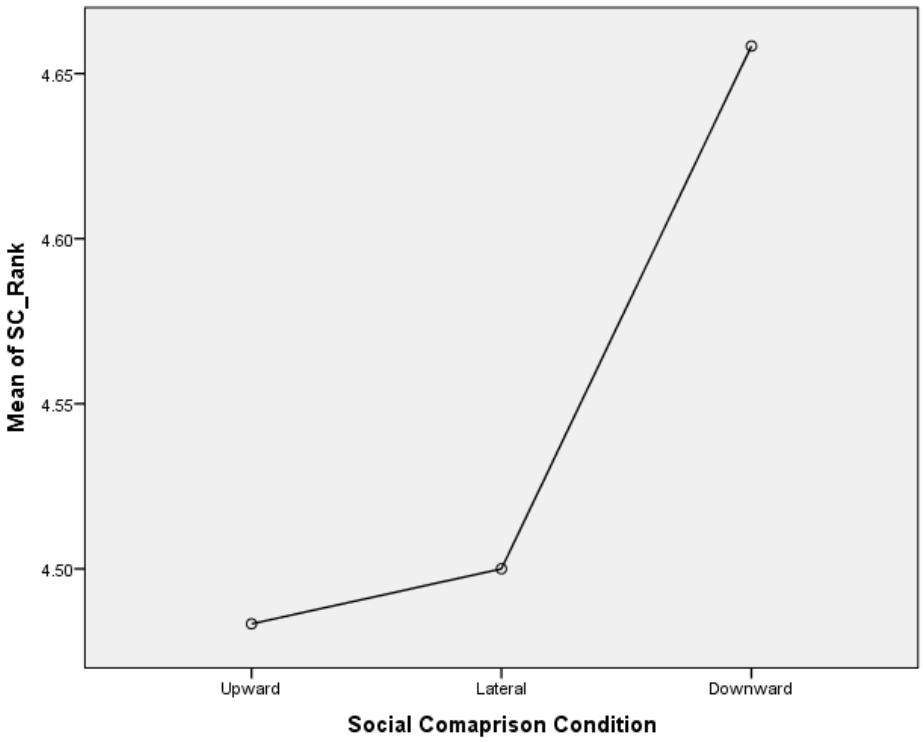

PSC_SocialAnxiety
Mean = 4.69
Std. Dev. = 1.608
N = 240
Frequency
PSC_SocialAnxiety

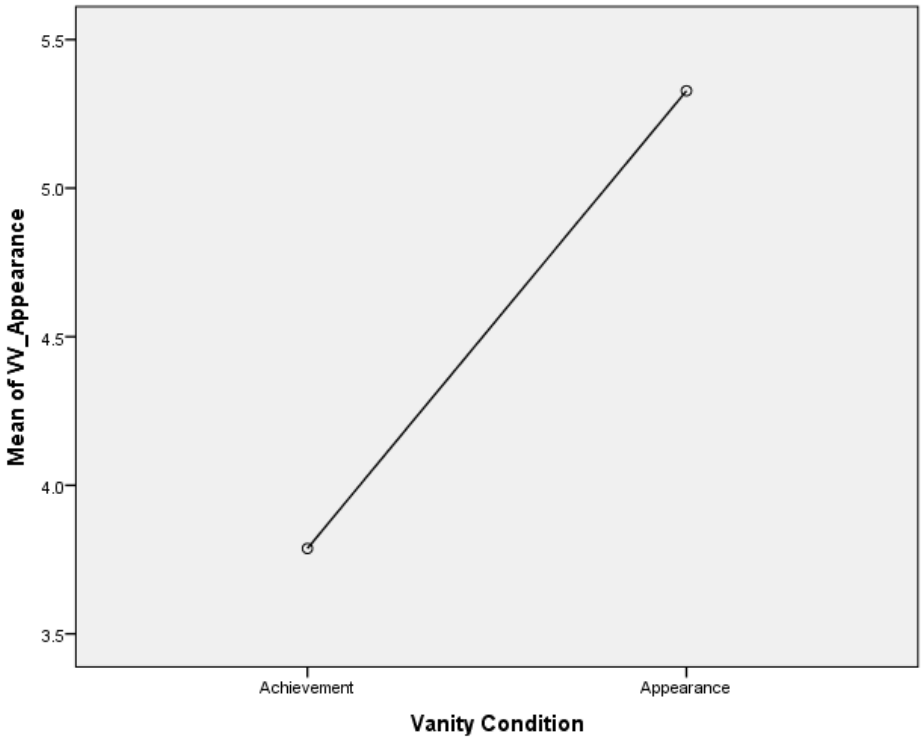
8.9 MEANS AND MEAN PLOTS FOR DIFFERENT MANIPULATION LEVELS

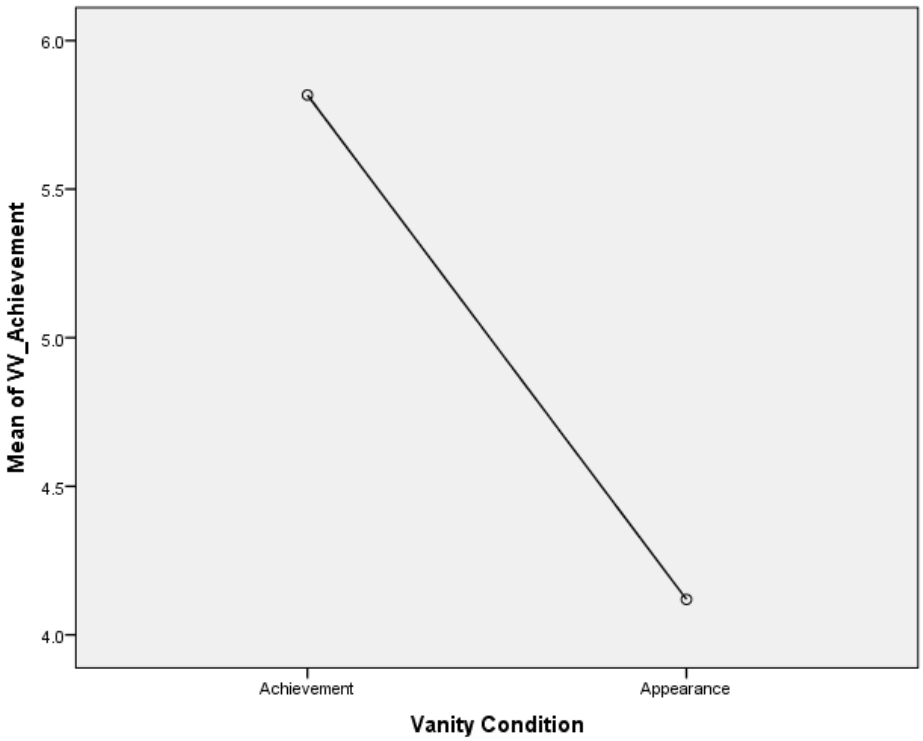
Manipulation	**Scale-Factor**	**Pre-Test***		**Main Experiment**	
		Mean	***Std Dev***	***Mean***	***Std Dev***
Social Comparison					
Upward	Attractiveness	4.86	.79	5.78	1.21
	Rank			4.48	1.21
Lateral	Attractiveness	4.35	.70	4.81	1.48
	Rank			4.50	1.12
Downward	Attractiveness	3.89	.78	4.84	1.53
	Rank			4.66	1.09
Vanity					
Appearance	Appearance	3.42	1.71	5.33	.99
	Achievement	3.12	1.37	4.12	1.40
Achievement	Appearance	3.19	1.22	3.79	1.50
	Achievement	3.46	1.58	5.82	1.08

* Total scale (rather than factor) scores were used in pre-test




4.65
4.60
4.55
4.50
Mean of SC_Rank
Upward
Lateral
Downward
Social Comaprison Condition


5.5
5.0
4.5
4.0
3.5
Mean of VV_Appearance
Achievement
Appearance
Vanity Condition


6.0
5.5
5.0
4.5
4.0
Mean of VV_Achievement
Achievement
Appearance
Vanity Condition

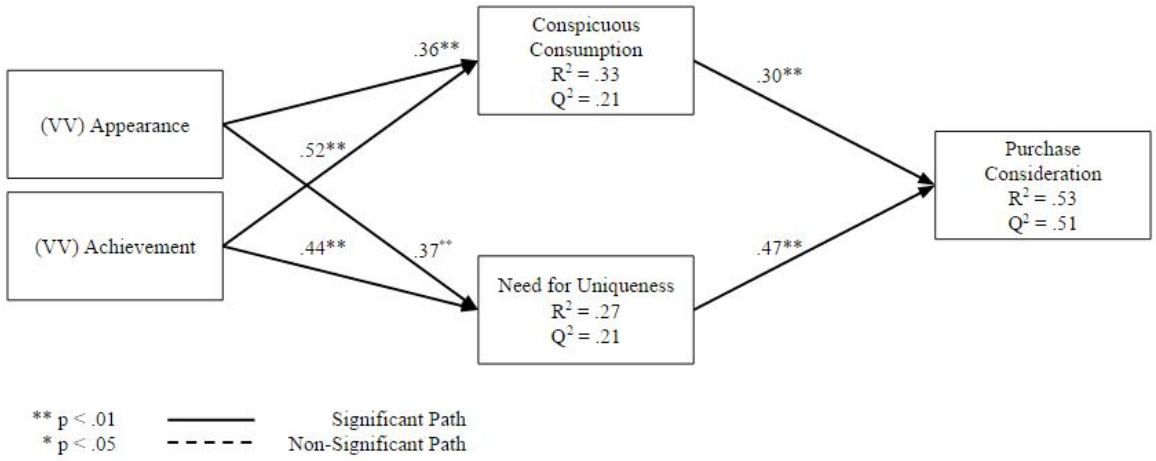
8.10 MODEL TESTING RESULTS FOR SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS

8.10.1 Private Self-Consciousness

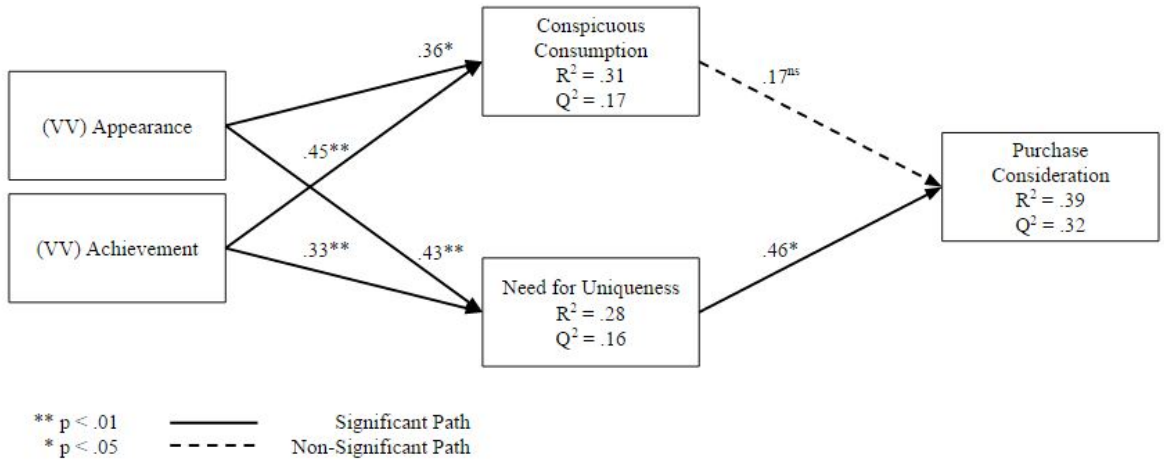
	High			***Low***		
	β	***t***	***Sig***	***β***	***t***	***Sig***
Conspicuous Consumption → Purchase Consideration	.30	3.21	**	.17	.94	NS
Need for Uniqueness → Purchase Consideration	.47	5.25	**	.46	2.38	*
(VV) Achievement → Conspicuous Consumption	.52	8.65	**	.45	5.00	**
(VV) Achievement → Need for Uniqueness	.44	6.57	**	.33	3.09	**
(VV) Appearance → Conspicuous Consumption	.36	5.03	**	.36	2.70	*
(VV) Appearance → Need for Uniqueness	.37	5.28	**	.43	3.96	**

** significant at .01 level, * significance at .05 level, NS = not significant

8.10.1.1 High Private Self-Consciousness



8.10.1.2 Low Private Self-Consciousness

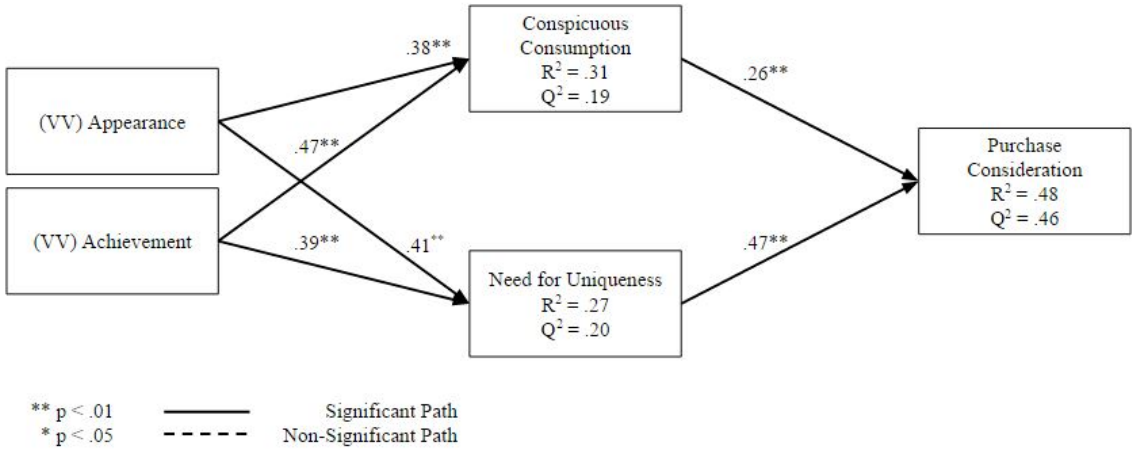


8.10.2 Public Self-Consciousness

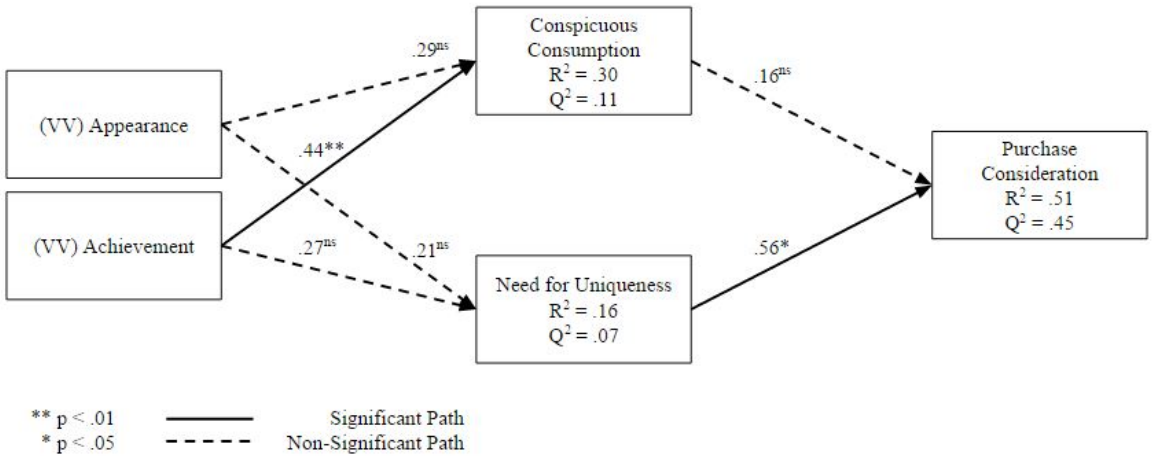
	High			*Low*		
	β	***t***	***Sig***	***β***	***t***	***Sig***
Conspicuous Consumption → Purchase Consideration	.26	3.06	**	.16	.57	NS
Need for Uniqueness → Purchase Consideration	.47	5.54	**	.56	2.40	*
(VV) Achievement → Conspicuous Consumption	.47	8.32	**	.44	3.44	**
(VV) Achievement → Need for Uniqueness	.39	6.36	**	.27	1.91	NS
(VV) Appearance → Conspicuous Consumption	.38	5.89	**	.29	1.45	NS
(VV) Appearance → Need for Uniqueness	.41	6.42	**	.21	1.00	NS

** significant at .01 level, * significance at .05 level, NS = not significant

8.10.2.1 High Public Self-Consciousness



8.10.2.2 Low Public Self-Consciousness

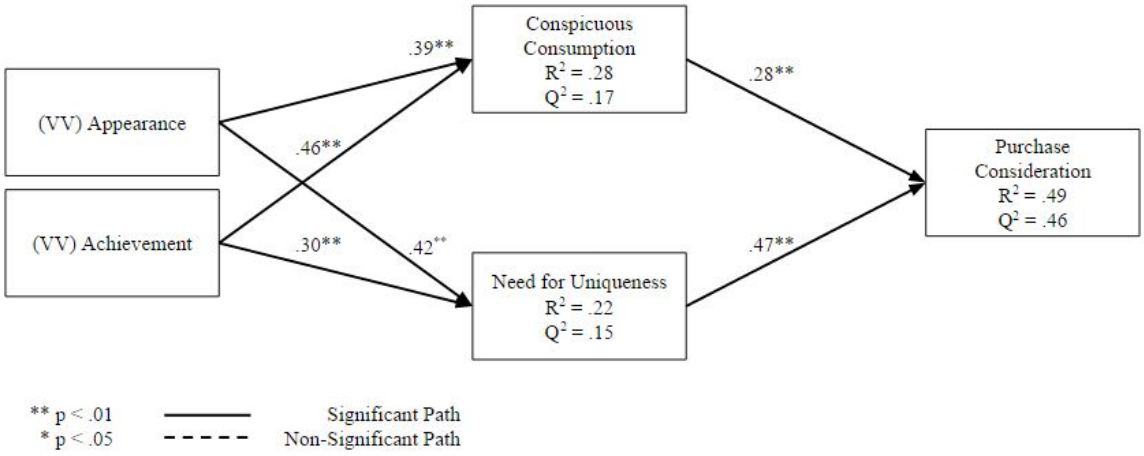


8.10.3 Social Anxiety

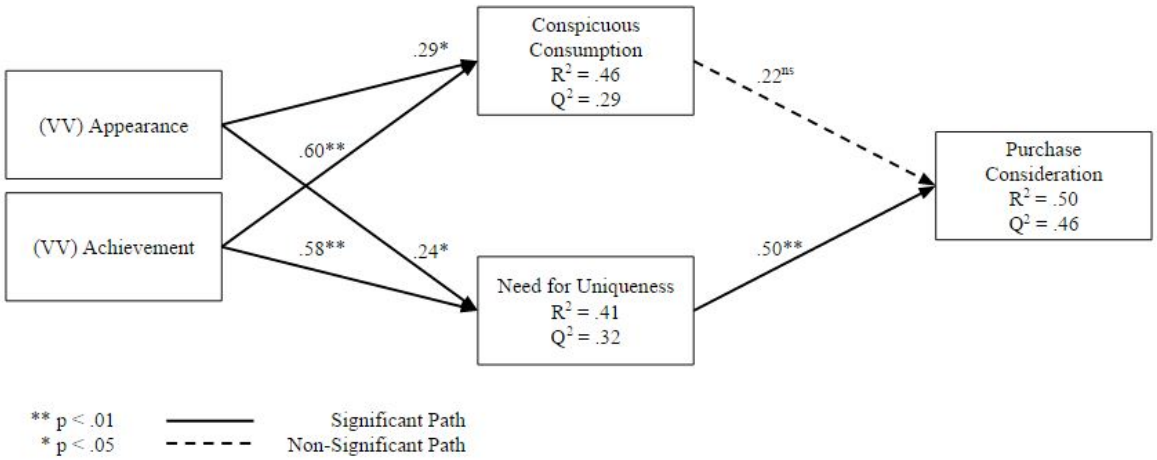
	High			*Low*		
	β	***t***	***Sig***	***β***	***t***	***Sig***
Conspicuous Consumption → Purchase Consideration	.28	2.98	**	.22	1.30	NS
Need for Uniqueness → Purchase Consideration	.47	5.27	**	.50	2.98	**
(VV) Achievement → Conspicuous Consumption	.46	7.21	**	.60	7.66	**
(VV) Achievement → Need for Uniqueness	.30	4.26	**	.58	7.28	**
(VV) Appearance → Conspicuous Consumption	.39	5.53	**	.29	2.64	*
(VV) Appearance → Need for Uniqueness	.42	5.97	**	.24	2.24	*

** significant at .01 level, * significance at .05 level, NS = not significant

8.10.3.1 High Social Anxiety



8.10.3.2 Low Social Anxiety



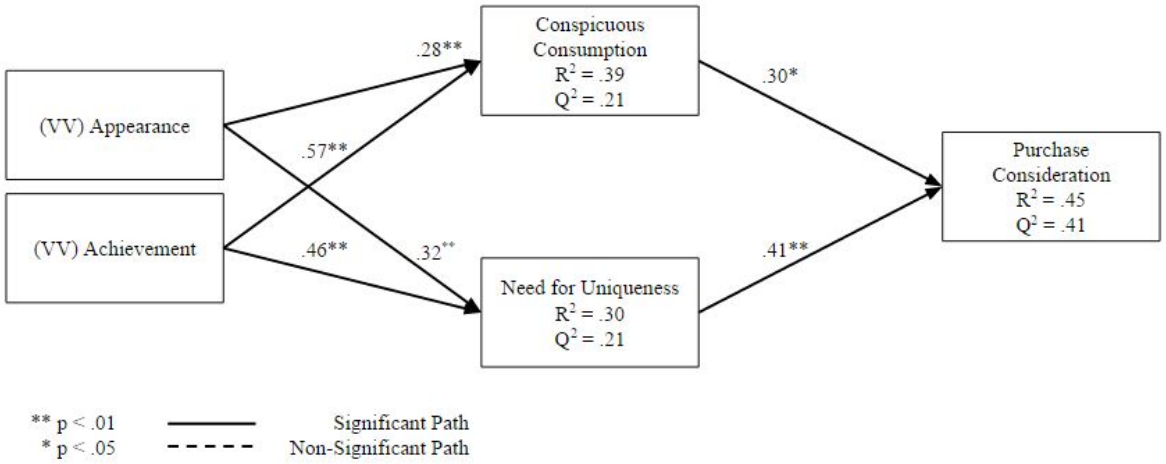
8.11 MODEL TESTING RESULTS FOR MATERIALISM

8.11.1 Centrality

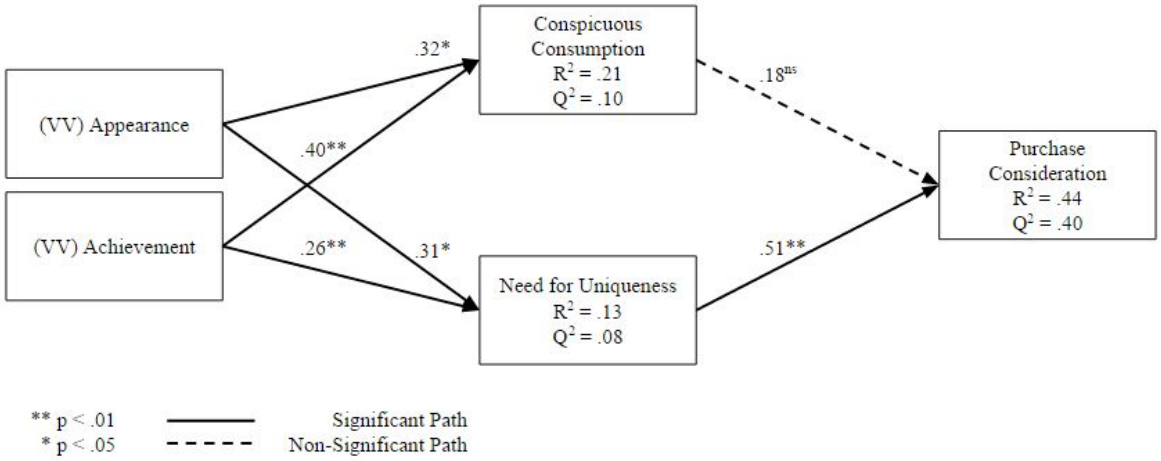
	High			*Low*		
	β	***t***	***Sig***	***β***	***t***	***Sig***
Conspicuous Consumption → Purchase Consideration	.30	2.54	*	.18	1.76	NS
Need for Uniqueness → Purchase Consideration	.41	3.44	**	.51	5.41	**
(VV) Achievement → Conspicuous Consumption	.57	7.90	**	.40	5.49	**
(VV) Achievement → Need for Uniqueness	.46	5.33	**	.26	3.33	**
(VV) Appearance → Conspicuous Consumption	.28	3.11	**	.32	2.73	*
(VV) Appearance → Need for Uniqueness	.32	3.67	**	.31	2.80	*

** significant at .01 level, * significance at .05 level, NS = not significant

8.11.1.1 High Centrality



8.11.1.2 Low Centrality

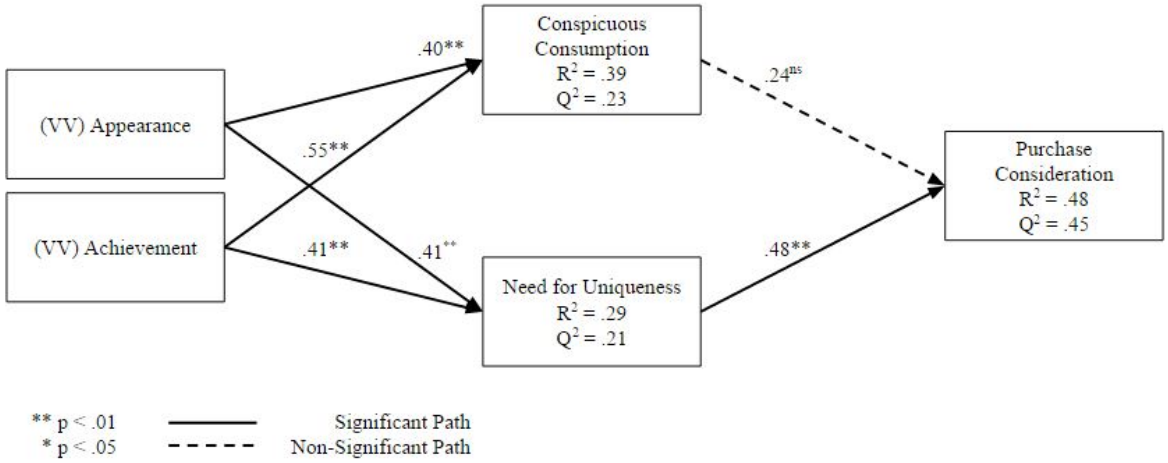


8.11.2 Happiness

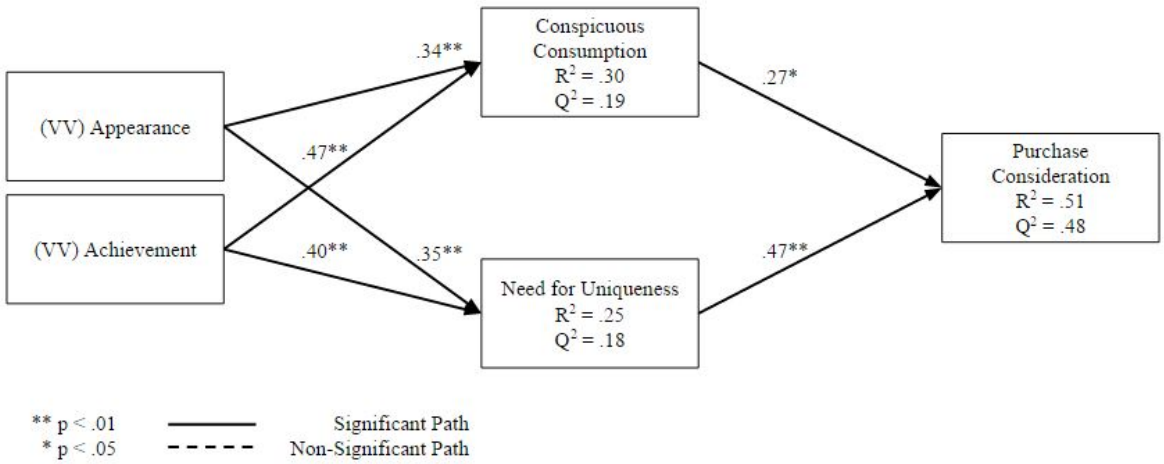
	High			*Low*		
	β	***t***	***Sig***	***β***	***t***	***Sig***
Conspicuous Consumption → Purchase Consideration	.24	1.97	NS	.27	2.54	*
Need for Uniqueness → Purchase Consideration	.48	3.79	**	.47	4.58	**
(VV) Achievement → Conspicuous Consumption	.55	7.61	**	.47	7.21	**
(VV) Achievement → Need for Uniqueness	.41	4.71	**	.40	5.60	**
(VV) Appearance → Conspicuous Consumption	.40	4.71	**	.34	4.24	**
(VV) Appearance → Need for Uniqueness	.41	5.00	**	.35	4.33	**

** significant at .01 level, * significance at .05 level, NS = not significant

8.11.2.1 High Happiness



8.11.2.2 Low Happiness



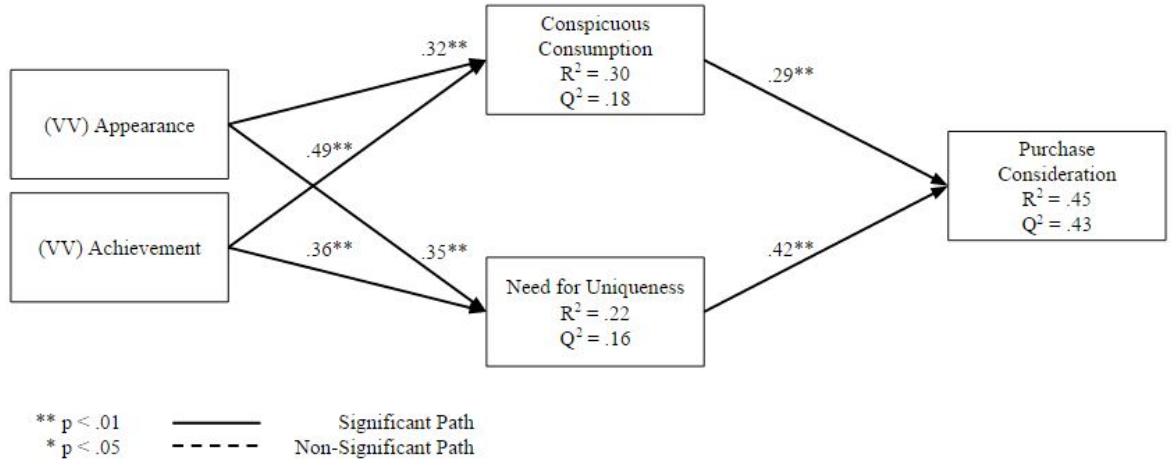
8.12 MODEL TESTING RESULTS FOR SOCIAL COMPARISON ORIENTATION

8.12.1 Ability

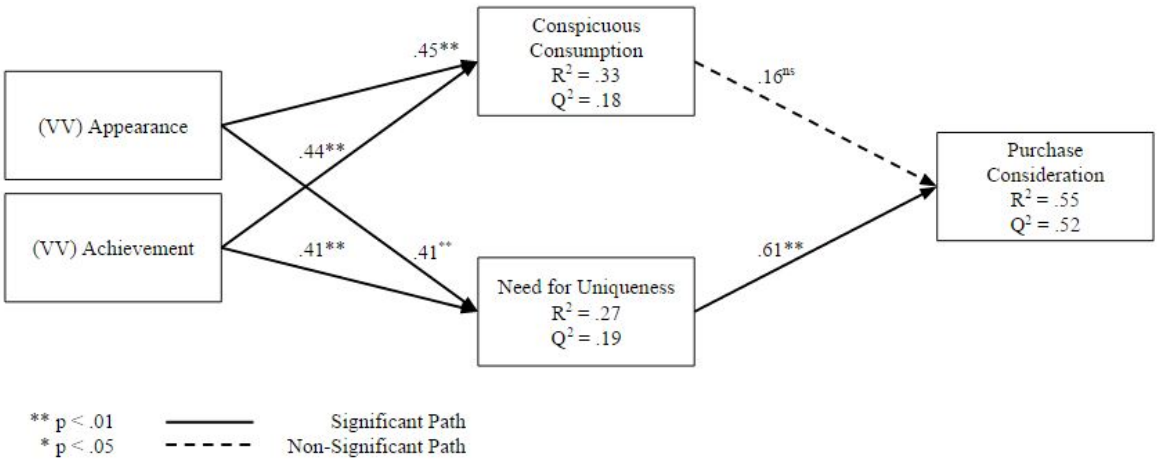
	High			***Low***		
	β	***t***	***Sig***	***β***	***t***	***Sig***
Conspicuous Consumption → Purchase Consideration	.29	3.09	**	.16	1.08	NS
Need for Uniqueness → Purchase Consideration	.42	4.48	**	.61	4.60	**
(VV) Achievement → Conspicuous Consumption	.49	8.93	**	.44	4.48	**
(VV) Achievement → Need for Uniqueness	.36	5.19	**	.41	4.08	**
(VV) Appearance → Conspicuous Consumption	.32	4.86	**	.45	3.93	**
(VV) Appearance → Need for Uniqueness	.35	5.26	**	.41	3.42	**

** significant at .01 level, * significance at .05 level, NS = not significant

8.12.1.1 High Ability



8.12.1.2 Low Ability

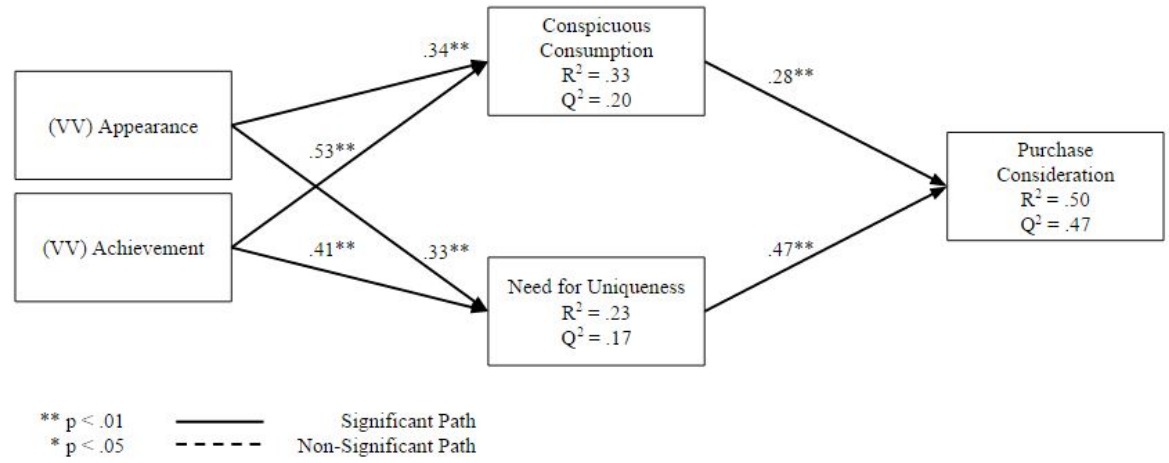


8.12.2 Opinion

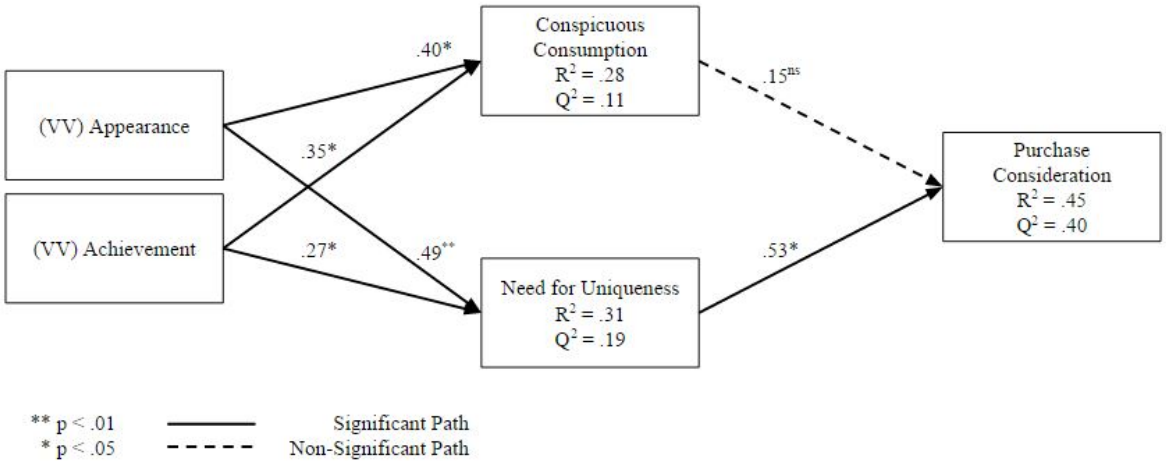
	High			*Low*		
	β	***t***	***Sig***	***β***	***t***	***Sig***
Conspicuous Consumption → Purchase Consideration	.28	3.30	**	.15	.63	NS
Need for Uniqueness → Purchase Consideration	.47	5.43	**	.53	2.68	*
(VV) Achievement → Conspicuous Consumption	.53	9.76	**	.35	2.35	*
(VV) Achievement → Need for Uniqueness	.41	6.55	**	.27	2.05	*
(VV) Appearance → Conspicuous Consumption	.34	5.04	**	.40	2.77	*
(VV) Appearance → Need for Uniqueness	.33	4.83	**	.49	4.04	**

** significant at .01 level, * significance at .05 level, NS = not significant

8.12.2.1 High Opinion



8.12.2.2 Low Opinion



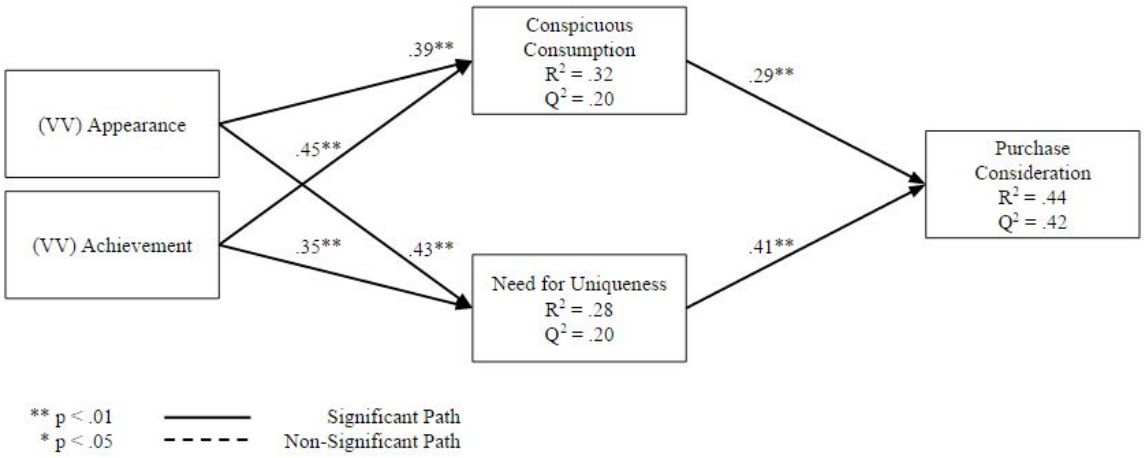
8.13 MODEL TESTING RESULTS FOR DIFFERENT LEVELS OF VANITY-CONCERN

8.13.1 Appearance

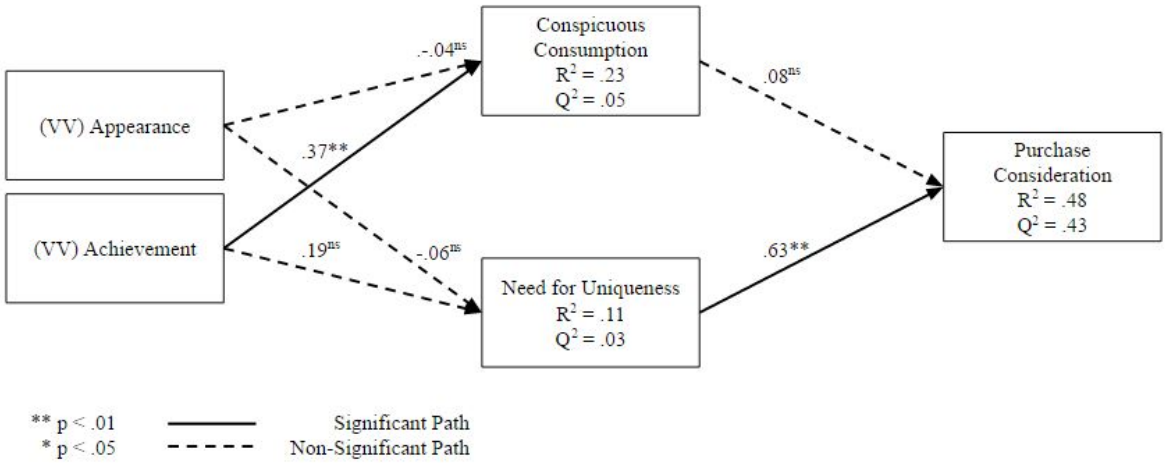
	High			***Low***		
	β	***t***	***Sig***	***β***	***t***	***Sig***
Conspicuous Consumption → Purchase Consideration	.29	3.11	**	.08	.59	NS
Need for Uniqueness → Purchase Consideration	.41	4.27	**	.63	5.56	**
(VV) Achievement → Conspicuous Consumption	.45	7.49	**	.37	2.92	**
(VV) Achievement → Need for Uniqueness	.35	5.48	**	.19	1.41	NS
(VV) Appearance → Conspicuous Consumption	.39	5.80	**	-.04	.24	NS
(VV) Appearance → Need for Uniqueness	.43	6.32	**	-.06	.32	NS

** significant at .01 level, * significance at .05 level, NS = not significant

8.13.1.1 High Appearance



8.13.1.2 Low Appearance

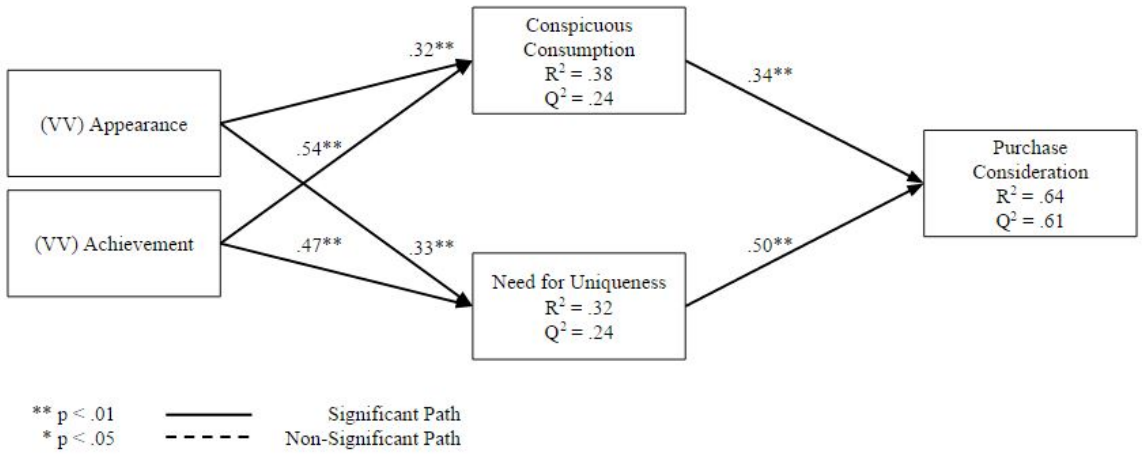


8.13.2 Achievement

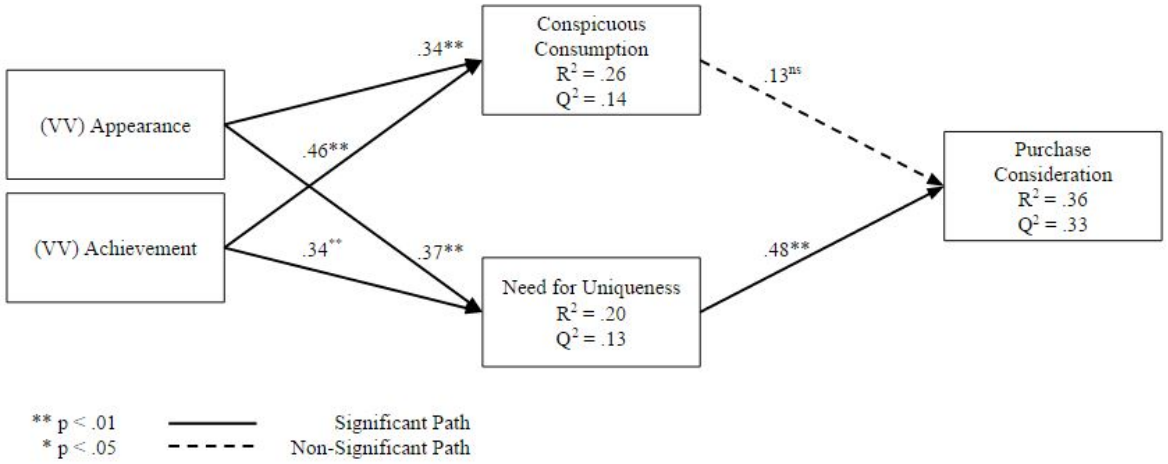
	High			*Low*		
	β	***t***	***Sig***	***β***	***t***	***Sig***
Conspicuous Consumption → Purchase Consideration	.34	2.96	**	.13	1.21	NS
Need for Uniqueness → Purchase Consideration	.50	4.31	**	.48	4.52	**
(VV) Achievement → Conspicuous Consumption	.54	6.54	**	.46	7.03	**
(VV) Achievement → Need for Uniqueness	.47	5.07	**	.34	4.73	**
(VV) Appearance → Conspicuous Consumption	.32	3.29	**	.34	4.38	**
(VV) Appearance → Need for Uniqueness	.33	3.55	**	.37	4.68	**

** significant at .01 level, * significance at .05 level, NS = not significant

8.13.2.1 High Achievement



8.13.2.2 Low Achievement



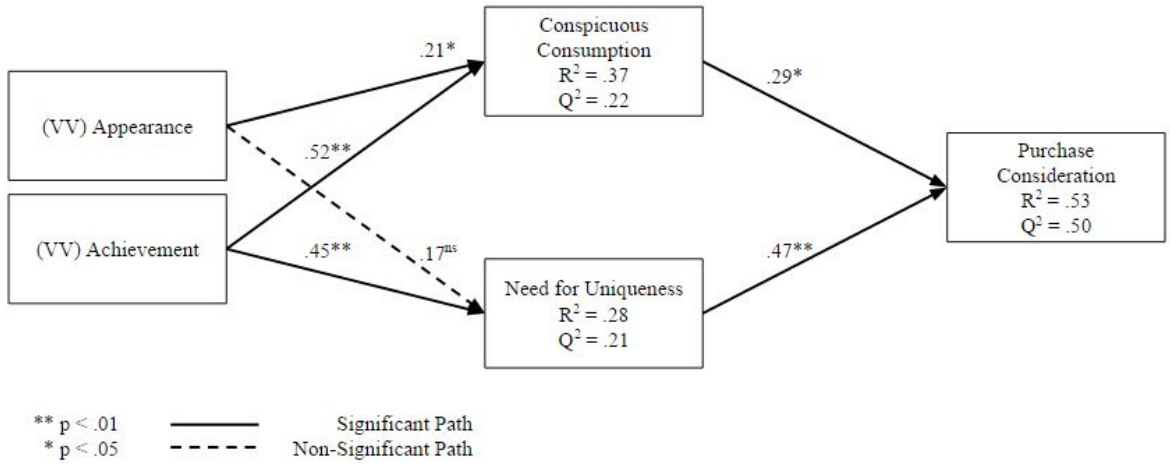
8.14 MODEL TESTING RESULTS FOR DIFFERENT VANITY CONDITIONS

8.14.1 Vanity Condition

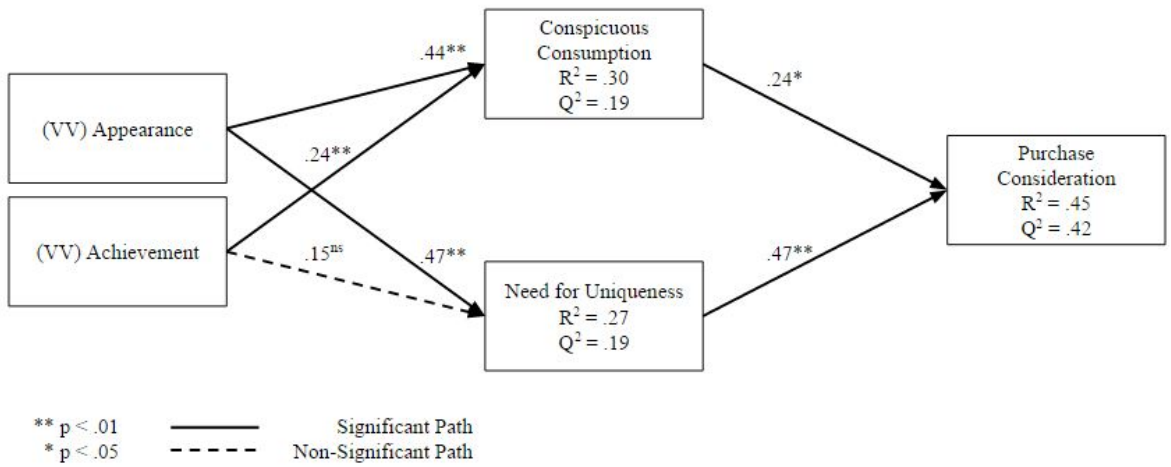
	Appearance			***Achievement***		
	β	***t***	***Sig***	***β***	***t***	***Sig***
Conspicuous Consumption → Purchase Consideration	.29	2.28	*	.24	2.19	*
Need for Uniqueness → Purchase Consideration	.47	3.94	**	.47	3.97	**
(VV) Achievement → Conspicuous Consumption	.52	7.14	**	.24	3.38	**
(VV) Achievement → Need for Uniqueness	.45	5.53	**	.15	1.89	NS
(VV) Appearance → Conspicuous Consumption	.21	2.21	*	.44	5.51	**
(VV) Appearance → Need for Uniqueness	.17	1.81	NS	.47	6.16	**

** significant at .01 level, * significance at .05 level, NS = not significant

8.14.1.1 Appearance



8.14.1.2 Achievement



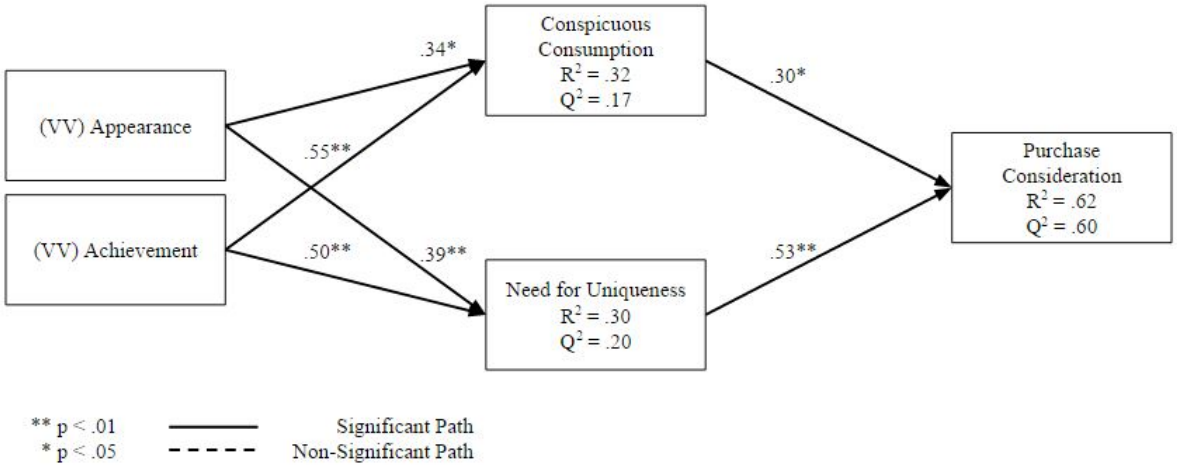
8.15 MODEL TESTING RESULTS FOR DIFFERENT COMPARISON CONDITIONS

8.15.1 Social Comparison Condition

	Upward			***Lateral/ Down***		
	β	***t***	***Sig***	***β***	***t***	***Sig***
Conspicuous Consumption → Purchase Consideration	.30	2.37	*	.24	2.32	*
Need for Uniqueness → Purchase Consideration	.53	4.15	**	.44	4.34	**
(VV) Achievement → Conspicuous Consumption	.55	6.24	**	.47	7.95	**
(VV) Achievement → Need for Uniqueness	.50	5.34	**	.34	5.42	**
(VV) Appearance → Conspicuous Consumption	.34	2.43	*	.38	5.22	**
(VV) Appearance → Need for Uniqueness	.39	3.01	**	.40	5.52	**

** significant at .01 level, * significance at .05 level, NS = not significant

8.15.1.1 Upward



8.15.1.2 Lateral/Downward